



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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On These And Other Legislative Issues Important To Working People

Governor Quinn Takes Action on Legislation

HB 77 – Firefighter Death/Flag Half Staff

Rep. Cole (R – Grayslake)
Sen. Althoff (R – Crystal Lake)

SUPPORT

Requires that the U.S. national and Illinois State flags be displayed at half-staff when an Illinois firefighter is killed in the line of duty.

**5/19/09 – Passed Both Chambers.
Signed by Governor. PA 96-0436**

HB 163 – Prevailing Wage

Rep. Tryon (R – Crystal Lake)
Sen. Althoff (R – Crystal Lake)

NEUTRAL

When a public body or other entity covered by the Prevailing Wage Act has awarded work to a contractor without a public bid, the public body shall provide the contractor with written notice on a separate paper that the Prevailing Wage was paid to all workers performing work.

**5/19/09 – Passed both chambers.
Signed by Governor. PA 96-0437**

HB 185 – MRSA Screening

Rep. Bellock (R – Westmont)
Sen. Radogno (R – Lemont)

SUPPORT

Creates the MRSA Prevention, Control, and Reporting Act. Sets forth methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus ("MRSA") prevention, control, and reporting activities that are applicable to state residential facilities.

**5/19/09 – Passed both chambers.
Signed by Governor. PA 96-0438**

HB 267 – Grace Period Registration

Rep. Davis (D – Chicago)
Sen. Meeks (D – Chicago)

SUPPORT

Amends the Election Code. Permits grace period registration until the 7th day (now, the 14th day) before the election or primary.

**5/19/09 – Passed Both Chambers.
Signed by Governor. PA 96-0441**

HB 2445 - Omnibus Collective Bargaining Act

Rep. Chapa LaVia (D - Aurora)
Sen. Sullivan (D – Rushville)

SUPPORT

Omnibus Collective Bargaining bill. Clarified that public employees wishing to organize may submit dues authorization cards OR majority interest petitions for certification of a Collective Bargaining Representative. Requires certification of union decisions to be returned by the Illinois Labor Relations Board (ILRB) & the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board (IELRB) within 120 days. Requires the ILRB to have 16 employees and 6 investigators, and the IELRB to have 8 employees and 5 investigators. Requires all documents submitted to the ILRB & IELRB to be kept confidential and not submitted to the employer.

Governor Amendatory Veto – Minimum staffing levels subject to appropriation.

**5/21/09 – Passed both chambers.
Amendatory Veto**

HB 3634 – Equal Pay Act Record Keeping

Rep. Currie (D – Chicago)/Sen. Lightford (D – Chicago)

SUPPORT

Requires employers to keep employment records for 5 years (now 3 years). Allows an employee to file a complaint up to one year from the date of the underpayment.

**5/18/09 – Passed both chambers.
Signed by Governor. PA 96-0467**

HB 3878 – Health Facility Closure Statement

Rep. Bradley (D – Marion)/Sen. Forby (D – Benton)

SUPPORT

Provides that a health care facility other than a hospital must provide a pre-closing statement to the Department of Public Health no less than 90 days before permanently closing.

**5/22/09 – Passed Both Chambers.
Signed by Governor. PA 96-0596**

HB 4251 – Staffing Levels

Rep. Phelps (D – Harrisburg)/Sen. Clayborne (D – East St. Louis)

SUPPORT

Amends the Public Utilities Act. Provides that the staff of the Illinois Commerce Commission shall develop

benchmarks for employee staffing levels for each classification.

**5/21/09 – Passed both chambers.
Signed by Governor. PA 96-0582**

SB 54 – Lobbyist Registration

Speaker Madigan (D – Chicago)/Sen. Garret (D – Highwood)

Monitor

Raises the registration fees to \$1,000 per lobbyist (from \$350) and includes increasing expenditure reporting requirements to weekly during legislative session and monthly when not in session. Requires lobbyists to take an annual ethics training program administered by the Secretary of State.

**5/22/09 – Passed both chambers.
Signed by Governor. PA 96-0555**

SB 1715 – Public Labor Relations

Sen. Harmon (D – Oak Park)/Rep. Miller (D – Dolton)

SUPPORT

Amends the Illinois Public Labor Relations Act. With respect to collective bargaining of an initial agreement between non-public safety employees and an employer with fewer than 35 employees, establishes a schedule for (i) commencing bargaining, (ii) in the event of a dispute, requesting mediation from the Illinois Public Labor Relations Board in accordance with the Act's provisions for public safety employee mediation, and (iii) in the event of an impasse, requesting arbitration in accordance with certain of the Act's provisions for public safety employee arbitration.

**5/22/09 – Passed both chambers.
Signed by Governor. PA 96-0598**

SB 2022 – Absentee Voting

Sen. Frerichs (D – Champaign)/Rep. Jakobsson (D – Champaign)

SUPPORT

Allows voters to request a mail-in absentee ballot without specifying a reason for absence from the polling place on election. Previously, the law required a reason for inability to vote at the polling place on Election Day.

**5/20/09 – Passed both chambers.
Signed by Governor. PA 96-0553**

Representative Ryg Leaving Illinois House to Advocate for Children

Voices for Illinois Children announced this week that Rep. Kathy Ryg (D-Vernon Hills) will be taking over as president of the organization, effective September 1. Ryg will reportedly resign her House seat in the 59th House District which encompasses parts of Cook and Lake Counties.

Senator Terry Link, Democratic Chair of Lake County and Commissioner Joe Berrios, Democratic Chair of Cook County will have three days after Ryg's resignation to declare the vacancy with the State Board of Elections, Secretary of State and Clerk of the House. To make the appointment to replace Ryg the Democratic County Chairs in Lake and Cook Counties will have a weighted vote based up the 2008 General Election vote totals in the 59th District. According to those vote totals, Senator Link will cast 88 percent of the vote and Commissioner Berrios will cast 12 percent. Link and Berrios will have thirty days from her resignation to appoint a replacement. State statute requires that her replacement be from the same political party.

Ryg will be taking over at *Voices for Illinois Children* from Jerry Stermer who resigned earlier this year to become Chief of Staff for Governor Quinn.

Illinois Unemployment Rate Up To 10.4%

The Illinois statewide unemployment rate for July is 10.4 percent, up 0.1 percent over June, according to figures released Thursday by the Illinois Department of Employment Security. Illinois payroll employment declined by 13,000 jobs in July, but the pace of job loss has decelerated for four consecutive months.

The number of unemployed increased for the 10th consecutive month to 692,500, reaching its highest level since April 1983.

The manufacturing sector contracted for the 18th consecutive month in July, but the loss of 2,000 jobs was the smallest decline in the last nine months.

Nationally, the July unemployment rate dipped to 9.4 percent, down 0.1 percent, but remains near its highest level in more than 25 years.

NATIONAL

Organizing for America's National Health Care Forum with President Obama

On Thursday, President Obama held a virtual forum for health care organizers and advocates to answer questions and concerns about proposed health care reforms.

He told viewers nationwide, including staff from the Illinois AFL-CIO, that he has not wavered from his goal of bringing quality, affordable health care to all Americans through health care system reforms and a viable public option plan. He said "We have to cut through the nonsense, noise and misinformation that's out there" and educate friends and family members on the realities and facts of the proposed plan.

He reiterated the facts of the plan his Administration is advocating:

REFORMS WILL

- 1) end discrimination for pre-existing conditions
- 2) end exorbitant out-of-pocket expenses
- 3) end cost-sharing for preventative care
- 4) end the dropping of coverage for the seriously ill
- 5) end gender discrimination
- 6) end annual or lifetime caps on coverage
- 7) extend coverage for young adults
- 8) guarantee insurance renewal as long as the policy is paid
- 9) extend health care to 500,000 more veterans
- 10) close the Medicare "doughnut" hole on prescription drugs
- 11) benefit small business by providing tax credits

REFORMS WILL NOT

- 1) lead to "government takeover" of health care or "rationing" - consumers will be able to keep private insurance if they are happy with the cost and coverage.
- 2) encourage "euthanasia"
- 3) cut Medicare coverage

The President also said he will pass a health care reform package with or without Republican input or support because America can not continue on the current path of skyrocketing costs combined with diminishing access to care.

Organizing for America is a grassroots organizing initiative of President Obama and the Democratic National Committee.