



# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Michael T. Carrigan, President  
Timothy E. Drea, Secretary Treasurer

*Published for Labor Activists*

Jan. 16, 2009

Call The Illinois AFL-CIO at (217) 544-4014 For More Information  
On These And Other Legislative Issues Important To Working People

The Illinois Senate will return to Springfield on Monday, January 26 to begin its impeachment trial. The Illinois House will convene on Tuesday, February 3.

## STATE NEWS

### SENATE TO BEGIN IMPEACHMENT TRIAL

Following the inauguration of the 96<sup>th</sup> General Assembly this week, the Illinois House reaffirmed their vote to impeach Governor Blagojevich by a vote of 117-1. The Senate will begin their impeachment trial on Monday, January 26<sup>th</sup>. The Senate has scheduled a trial from January 26<sup>th</sup> through February 2<sup>nd</sup>, before beginning the full legislative session in earnest.

#### JCAR Approves Changes to Workers Compensation Fee Schedule

At a hearing this week, the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules (JCAR) approved the proposed changes to the Workers Compensation medical fee schedule. The anticipated effective date of these changes will be February 1, 2009.

The proposed rules will create fee schedules for 1) ambulatory surgical treatment centers; 2) hospital outpatient radiology, pathology and laboratory, physical medicine and rehabilitation services, and surgical services; and 3) rehabilitation hospitals.

The proposed rules also specify that the hospital inpatient fee schedule will convert from the DRG coding system to the MS-DRG coding system no later than June 30, 2009.

#### Commission Votes to Delay Closure of State Facilities

The bi-partisan panel of the Illinois Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability (COGFA) voted overwhelmingly (9-1) to temporarily withhold final action regarding the proposed closure of the Tinley Park Mental Health Facility and Howe Developmental Center, also in Tinley Park.

The panel's recommendation was to delay the closure for no longer than 60 days after Blagojevich's impeachment trial ends. The Illinois Department of Human Services had announced in September of 2008 that it wanted to close the two facilities by July 2009.

#### SB 1132 – Coal Development and Supplemental Appropriations

Sen. Trotter (D – Chicago)  
Rep. Hannig (D – Gillespie)

##### SUPPORT

Appropriates \$35 million to the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) for the purposes of a seed study on the Tenaska Energy Center, 3.125 million to the DCEO for grants associated with the Employment Opportunities Grant Program and \$696,000 for Job Training and Economic Development Grant Program. In addition, \$11.3 million was appropriated to the Secretary of State, \$6.75 million to the Attorney General, and approximately \$1.8 million to the State Treasurer for ordinary and contingent expenses.

*Passed the Senate 57-0-0.*

*Passed both Houses.*

#### SB 1174 – Breast Cancer Prevention and Treatment

Sen. Collins (D – Chicago)  
Rep. Harris (D – Chicago)

##### SUPPORT

Amends the Illinois Public Aid Code and the Illinois Insurance Code to require coverage of mammograms and comprehensive ultrasound screenings for certain women under the medical assistance program. Requires accident and health insurance policies and managed care plans to provide coverage for all medically necessary pain medication

and pain therapy related to the treatment of breast cancer; makes these provisions applicable to benefits under the State Employees Group Insurance Act of 1971, the Counties Code, the Illinois Municipal Code, the School Code, the Health Maintenance Organization Act, and the Voluntary Health Services Plans Act.

*Passed the Senate 57-0-0.*

*Awaits the Governor's signature.*

#### SB 2173 – Infertility

Sen. Delgado (D – Chicago)  
Rep. Lang (D – Skokie)

##### SUPPORT

Amends the State Employees Group Insurance Act of 1971. Provides that the program of health benefits shall provide the coverage required for the diagnosis and treatment of infertility under the Illinois Insurance Code.

*Passed the Senate 36-19-0.*

*Awaits the Governor's signature.*

#### SB 2362 – Active Military Creditable Service

Sen. Cronin (R – Lombard)  
Rep. Saviano (R – River Grove)

##### SUPPORT

Allows a firefighter to establish creditable service of up to 24 months towards their pension for service in the active military of the United States that was served prior to employment by a municipality or fire protection district as a firefighter.

*Passed the Senate 57-0-0.*

*Awaits the Governor's signature.*



## Jackson Appointed to 114<sup>th</sup> Representative District Seat

On Friday, January 9, 2009, the Democratic Representative Committee for the 114<sup>th</sup> Representative District chose Eddie Lee Jackson, Sr. to replace Representative Wyvetter Younge, who held the seat from 1975 until her passing on December 26, 2008.

Jackson comes to the position with a strong background in public service and city planning. He has been a member and Pro Tem of the East Saint Louis City Council since 1979. He is also the chairman of the East St. Louis Democratic Organization. He served as the East St. Louis City Planner and as the principal of A.M. Jackson Elementary School from 1989 to 2004. Jackson has a bachelor's degree in education and a master's degree in city planning from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville.

Jackson says he will focus on the needs of the people of his district and pledged to fight for working men and women in Illinois and to champion workers' rights in Springfield.

According to AFL-CIO records, over 6,000 union members live in the 114<sup>th</sup> Representative District.

The Illinois AFL-CIO assisted in sponsoring a welcome reception for Representative Jackson Tuesday evening. The Illinois AFL-CIO wishes Rep. Jackson the best of luck in his new position and look forward to working with him in the future.

## APPOINTEES TO CAUCUS LEADERSHIP

The 96<sup>th</sup> General Assembly was sworn in on Wednesday, January 14<sup>th</sup>. The Senate Democrats and Republicans chose new leaders for the next two years. The new Senate President will be John Cullerton (D – Chicago) and the new Minority Leader is Christine Radogno (R – Lemont). Speaker Michael Madigan (D – Chicago) retained his leadership position, as did Minority Leader Tom Cross (R – Plainfield). The other leadership positions are as follows:

### SENATE DEMOCRATS

**James Clayborne**, Belleville, majority leader  
**James DeLeo**, Chicago, assistant majority leader  
**Rickey Hendon**, Chicago, assistant majority leader  
**Don Harmon**, Oak Park, assistant majority leader  
**Kim Lightford**, Maywood, assistant majority leader  
**Jeffrey Schoenberg**, Evanston, assistant majority leader  
**Tony Munoz**, Chicago, caucus chair

### SENATE REPUBLICANS

**Dale Righter**, Mattoon, deputy minority leader  
**Brad Burzynski**, Clare, assistant minority leader  
**John Jones**, Mount Vernon, assistant minority leader  
**Dave Luechtefeld**, Okawville, assistant minority leader  
**Dan Rutherford**, Chenoa, assistant minority leader  
**Dave Syverson**, Rockford, caucus chair

### HOUSE DEMOCRATS

**Barbara Flynn Currie**, Chicago, majority leader  
**Art Turner**, Chicago, deputy majority leader  
**Gary Hannig**, Gillespie, deputy majority leader  
**Edward Acevedo**, Chicago, assistant majority leader  
**Louis Lang**, Skokie, assistant majority leader  
**Joe Lyons**, Chicago, assistant majority leader  
**Jack McGuire**, Joliet, assistant majority leader  
**Charles Jefferson**, Rockford, assistant majority leader  
**Frank Mautino**, Spring Valley, assistant majority leader  
**David Miller**, Lynwood, Democratic Caucus Chair

### LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS

**Esther Golar**, (D-Chicago) was elected the House Co-chair of the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus for the 96<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. The African American Senator's will elect the Senate Co-Chair in the near future.

*(House Republicans have not yet appointed their leadership team)*

## Governor Signs Bills for Tenaska Energy Center

The Governor signed SB 1987 and SB 1511 Monday to step forward towards the appropriation of funds for construction of Illinois' first clean-coal powered plant and the creation of more than 1,500 jobs. The two bills promote renewable energy and clean coal technology in a way that protects the environment and consumers, as well as stimulates the economy by creating jobs. The Area Building Trades signed a Project Labor Agreement in 2006 for the plant.

## Former State Rep., Son of Former State Fed. President Dies

Carl Soderstrom, 93, the son of Reuben Soderstrom the long-time president of the Illinois AFL-CIO, died on Tuesday in Streator, IL.

Carl Soderstrom served in the Illinois Legislature from 1950 until 1974. He was the chairman of the Education Committee and sponsored numerous pieces of legislation that benefited working families during his tenure.

Carl's father, Reuben, was president of the Illinois Labor Federation from 1930 until 1970. On Sept. 19, 2008, Carl was a special guest at the 50th Anniversary celebration of the signing of the Illinois AFL-CIO charter. Carl opened the ceremonies with the same gavel his father had used to open the meeting in 1958 when the charter was originally signed in Peoria.

Carl's funeral services will be at 2 pm on Saturday, Jan. 17 at Elias Funeral Home in Streator. Visitation is today, Friday, Jan. 16 from 4:30 to 7:30 pm.



## BURRIS TAKES OATH OF OFFICE

U.S. Sen. Roland Burris was sworn in on Thursday by Vice President Dick Cheney at a Capitol Hill ceremony. Burris, now the junior senator from Illinois, replaces President-elect Barack Obama. With Burris, the count in the senate now stands at 58 Democrats and 41 Republicans. Although, Al Franken won the recount, the US Senate election in Minnesota between Al Franken (D) and Norm Coleman (R) is currently being litigated.

Below is contact information for Sen. Burris in Washington. The Illinois AFL-CIO will forward all additional contact information as we gather it.

SENATOR ROLAND W. BURRIS  
523 DIRKSEN SENATE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON DC 20510  
DC Phone: 202-224-2854

### Support for the Employee Free Choice Act

There are many issues facing the new Congress, including the Employee Free Choice Act. The Illinois AFL-CIO has contacted all Illinois Congressmen and women who supported the Act in 2007 – when it passed the House and garnered majority support in the Senate. All Illinois Representatives who previously supported the bill have agreed they will continue to stand with working families on this critical issue, as has Sen. Durbin. The Illinois AFL-CIO will be in contact with Sen. Burris in the coming week to seek his support on the Employee Free Choice Act.

### Five File For Fifth Special Election

With the Monday January 19<sup>th</sup> filing deadline looming, five candidates have thus far turned in nominating petitions to run in the special election to fill the vacant congressional seat in the 5th District.

The seat was previously held by Rahm Emanuel, President-Elect Barack Obama's Chief of Staff. The Special Election dates were set by the Governor for Tuesday, March 3 for the Primary and Tuesday, April 7 for the General Election.

State Representatives Sara Feigenholtz (D-12) and John Fritchey (D-11) are among several who filed when the period opened Monday. Other filers include Charles Wheelan (D), Justin Oberman (D), Victor Forys (D), Tom Hanson (R), and Deb Letitia Gordils (GREEN).

The 5<sup>th</sup> CD is located mostly within the north side of Chicago with parts stretching from the lakefront west into the Cook County suburbs. The 5th CD is home to a significant number of Union Households and the seat has historically been held by labor backed Democrats.

### U.S. House Votes Again to Expand SCHIP

On Wednesday, the House voted for the third time to expand the State Children's Health Insurance Reauthorization Program (SCHIP). The Act would provide health coverage for 11 million children from low-income families who are struggling to make ends meet, including 345,000 Illinois children.

SCHIP was passed twice during the 110th Congress, but was vetoed by President Bush both times. President-elect Obama has pledged to sign the bill.

The vote was mainly along party lines – 289-139. All Illinois Democrats voted for the bill, along with Republican Rep. Mark Kirk. All other Illinois Republicans voted against it.