



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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PUBLISHED FOR LABOR ACTIVISTS BY THE ILLINOIS AFL-CIO

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The Illinois General Assembly adjourned its spring session late last night. The Illinois Senate released its Fall veto session calendar and is schedule to return on Tuesday, October 25. The House has not released a Fall veto session calendar. Senate President Cullerton warned Senate members that they may need to return to Springfield prior to October. The possibility exists that Governor Quinn may veto or amendatorily veto the budget plan sent to him. If this occurs, it may necessitate the General Assembly to reconvene prior to October.

**WE
ARE
ONE**

Pension Attack Dead - For Now

Following an intensive public information campaign and strategic lobbying by union members and families, which included over 30,000 phone calls, attempts to push further public employee pension cuts through the General Assembly in the last days of session was abandoned.

House Speaker Michael J. Madigan (D-Chicago) and House Minority Leader Tom Cross (R-Oswego) issued a joint statement with Tyrone Fahner, president of the Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago, saying they would focus on summer hearings with the goal of running a bill during the Fall veto session. Fahner's group is leading the corporate-driven attack on public employee pensions. Fahner's pension plan is reportedly worth millions of dollars. The joint statement can be found at <http://www.ilaf-cio.org/laborbills.htm>

"The retreat on pensions was a fitting close to a session dominated by Labor playing defense", according to Michael T. Carrigan, President of the Illinois AFL-CIO. A statewide radio and television strategy, along with member mobilization contributed to the successful effort.

"It worked the way we drew it up," Carrigan said. "Unions pitched in for the mass media campaign, lobbyists worked together and working families up and down the state were unified and vocal in getting this stopped."

Clearly the House is still intent on cutting public employee pensions, though.

"We'll just need to keep the heat on them," Carrigan said. "The State didn't make its pension payments over the years and the workers did. We can't let them balance the budget on the backs of workers." ■

Public Employee Unions Fend Off Governor Quinn's Attacks on Collective Bargaining

Governor Quinn's office made an attempt in the last few hours of session to pass an amendment to SB 1556, which would strip thousands of public employees of collective bargaining rights. Governor Quinn's office pursued this legislation despite labor's willingness to sit down and negotiate. Representative Mautino (D - Spring Valley) filed the amendment and Leader Currie sponsored the legislation in the House, where it passed 62-52-1. After an intense lobbying effort the bill was not called for a vote in the Senate, where it lacked support for passage. The Illinois AFL-CIO wishes to thank the Illinois Senate for its support of collective bargaining rights.

Governor Quinn has recently taken a more active leadership role in the National Democratic Governors' Association, particularly in fundraising efforts. He has, as recently as April 2011, chided Republican Governors for stripping public employees' collective bargaining rights around the country. Behind the scenes, national labor leaders, including National AFL-CIO President Trumka, called Governor Quinn to request further negotiations on this issue. Quinn continued to pursue SB 1556 despite the calls. It remains unclear whether Governor Quinn will be an effective fundraiser for the Democratic Governors' Association following his pursuit of this anti-worker legislation. ■



New Maps Pass Legislature

Illinois Loses Congressional Seat; Dramatic Boundary Changes

The General Assembly completed its part of the remap effort this past weekend by approving the 18 new congressional districts drawn to reflect population changes following the census. The legislation containing the new boundaries now goes to the Governor's desk for approval.

The legislature previously passed the new House and Senate state legislative districts late last week.

Illinois lost one seat due to slower population growth than other states – primarily in the south and west – as the 435 Congressional seats were reapportioned across the country.

The process was controlled by the Democrats who hold majorities in the House and Senate, creates several competitive and Democrat-leaning districts – leaving several GOP incumbents with some tough decisions on where to run.

First-term Congressman Joe Walsh (R-McHenry) was put in the same district as fellow GOP rookie Rep. Randy Hultgren in the new 14th District. Longtime Northern Illinois Rep. Donald Manzullo (R-Egan) was drawn into a district with Rep. Peter Roskam. The map also puts freshman Congressman Robert Dold into a district with Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-Evanston). Another GOP freshman Adam Kinzinger was put in a district with veteran Democrat Jesse Jackson Jr.

Downstate Congressman John Shimkus (R-Collinsville) was put in an expansive district taking in large tracts of south central Illinois. Tim Johnson (R-Urbana) was in a new district drawn to include most of Springfield, Decatur, Champaign stretching down toward the metro-east will likely see a strong Democrat voting base.

The 17th District, currently represented by Republican Bobby Schilling, now stretches north to Rockford, taking in more Democrat turf.

The state legislative maps, contained in Senate Bill 1177 (House Amendment 2), passed on partisan roll calls.

The new legislative maps can be viewed at:

<http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/DistrictMapsII.asp?Site=T>

<http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/CongressionalDistrictMaps.asp?Site=T>

GA Sends Quinn \$33.2 Billion Budget

Cuts Will Impact State Services

The General Assembly passed a \$33.2 billion budget that included cuts in several areas affecting working families.

In addition, the House refused to approve an additional \$431 million in appropriations for social services the Senate passed on Monday. The Senate attached the additional money to legislation containing public works construction projects.

The budget is \$2 billion less than what Gov. Pat Quinn included in his budget proposal early this spring.

Most state agencies had funding slashed from five to 10 percent along with deep cuts in Department of Human Services Mental Health and Developmental Centers.

The Associated Press did a rundown of some of the other cuts included in the budget:

- About \$200 million statewide was cut from education spending compared with this year. The cuts will affect how much in general state aid payments schools get, leave less money for transportation such as buses and slash funding for early education programs.
- Illinois Cares Rx, a prescription drug assistance program started under former Gov. Rod Blagojevich, was targeted for elimination by Quinn. Lawmakers approved 50 percent of the current year's funding instead.

That means the benchmark for a family of two to get the coverage will be \$29,140 instead of the current \$36,425. The program is for highly expensive prescription drugs, usually medicine that is injected.

- To cut down on the number of poor people using emergency rooms for minor issues, the state would start charging a co-pay of \$10 — twice the regular rate — for going to emergency rooms for non-emergencies.

Lawmakers also endorsed paying higher rates to hospitals that work with patients to reduce unnecessary readmissions and less to hospitals that allow the costly practice. Saving estimates run as high as \$40 million a year.

- The state would cut in half the amount of interest it offers when it falls behind in paying hospitals, doctors and other health care providers. Instead of 2 percent a month starting after 60 days, the interest rate would be 1 percent starting after 90 days for late payments. ■

Workers Comp, Gaming Expansion Sent To Quinn

Illinois Loses Congressional Seat; Dramatic Boundary Changes

A proposal billed as significant cost savings to the business community on Workers Compensation costs passed the House Monday and was sent to the Gov. Pat Quinn.

Quinn said in a press conference on Wednesday that he would sign the measure.

The changes to the system include cutting payments to physicians and hospitals, tightening review of injuries and limiting awards for Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, among other changes. The state federation took a neutral position after mitigating the most damaging aspects of earlier reform drafts.

“Workers compensation is a basic right in our society,” said President Michael T. Carrigan. “As workplace regulations have eased over the last three decades, workers have been forced to stretch the workday, take more chances in unsafe environments and do more for less. ... We believe this legislation is not as punitive to workers as earlier drafts. The negotiators have listened and responded to many of our concerns.” ■

Five New Casinos in Gambling Package

A Labor-supported gaming expansion bill passed the General Assembly by the slimmest of margins in the Senate Monday on a 30-27 vote. Gov. Quinn said the bill may be “excessive”, but would not say definitively whether or not he would veto. President Cullerton has filed a motion to reconsider on this bill.

The bill creates five new casinos in the following cities: Chicago, Danville, Rockford, Park City (Waukegan), and in the south suburbs of Chicago. It also contains: permits for slots and harness racing nine months a year at the Illinois State Fairgrounds in Springfield; slot machines behind security checkpoints at O’Hare Airport; expansion of existing gaming positions and an option for riverboats to become land-based casinos. ■

Prevailing Wage Booster Passes Both Chambers

Gov’s Signature Makes Violations Criminal Cases

Violations of the state’s Prevailing Wage Law will be a criminal offense if Gov. Pat Quinn signs a bill sent to his desk by the General Assembly this week.

The bill, House Bill 3237, sponsored by Rep. Brandon Phelps (D-Harrisburg) and Sen. Dave Koehler (D-Peoria), changes the penalty for violating the Act to a Class A misdemeanor and requires the Illinois Department of Labor to debar (prohibit from gaining work with the State) violators for four years. A Class A misdemeanor carries a maximum one year prison sentence.

The initiative passed the Senate 36-19 last week and the House agreed with the amendment on Tuesday. ■

Energy Bills

Two synthetic natural gas (SNG) plants planned for construction passed the General Assembly this week.

The Leucadia National Corp plant (SB 1533),

a \$3 billion plant to be built on the South Side of Chicago passed both chambers this week, and will now head to the Governor’s desk. Power Holdings (SB 2169) planned for Jefferson County in Southern Illinois passed both chambers, and will now head to the Governor’s desk. It is estimated each plant will create over 1,000 construction jobs and hundreds of permanent jobs.

Efforts were made to pass legislation for the proposed Tenaska clean coal plant in Taylorville. An amendment to SB 1653 was filed that would have created thousands of jobs in central Illinois, with little impact on rates for large and small consumers. It would have helped replace power from 40% of Illinois coal plants expected to close by 2020. The legislation, despite a very good lobbying effort, could not muster enough votes for passage in the House.

Commonwealth Edison’s legislation (SB 1652), to install a modernized power grid in Illinois, passed both chambers this week. This legislation will produce many jobs; however, it will come at a cost of rate increases for consumers. The bill has been held in the Senate on a motion to reconsider the vote, filed by President Cullerton. Governor Quinn has promised a veto of the bill.

SB 2062 passed the House and Senate to pave the way for the Future-Gen project. It limits state liability for the carbon sequestration facility to be located in Morgan County. The language is necessary before the project can move forward. ■



Sen. Dick Durbin testifies before the House Public Utilities Committee.

Statewide PLA Bill Passes on Party-Line Votes

Makes Executive Order State Law

On largely party-line votes in the House and Senate, a bill making a nine-year-old Executive Order on statewide Project Labor Agreements (PLA) now heads to the Governor's desk.

Last week, the Senate passed the measure 33-26 with Democrats Susan Garrett (D-Highwood) and John Sullivan (D-Rushville) joining all Republicans opposing. In the House, Republicans Mike McAuliffe (R-Chicago), Skip Saviano (R-Rosemont), Raymond Poe (R-Springfield), and Rich Brauer (R-Petersburg) joined Democrats in passing the bill 69-26.

The Executive Order, originally implemented in 2003, was reissued by Gov. Pat Quinn. It makes PLAs the policy of the State concerning capital construction projects under state agencies. ■

DREAM Act Moves to Governor

Legislation that would offer undocumented youth better access to higher education, passed in the Illinois House of Representatives on a bipartisan 60-54 vote. SB 2185, sponsored by Rep. Edward Acevedo and Senate President Cullerton, is supported by the Illinois AFL-CIO, as well as hundreds of faith leaders, business leaders, and community organizations.

The Illinois DREAM Act will establish a privately-funded Illinois DREAM Fund, administered by a volunteer state commission, to make scholarships available to children of immigrants who graduate from Illinois high schools. It will also enable high school counselors and college admissions officers to be fully informed regarding educational opportunities for immigrant youth. The Illinois DREAM Act will impose no costs on Illinois taxpayers. ■

HB 180 – Cemetery and Funeral Pickets

Rep. Hatcher (R – Yorkville)/Sen. Wilhelmi (D – Crest Hill)

NEUTRAL

The intent of the legislation is to target the groups that protest at a fallen soldier's services, unfortunately, this could impact union pickets as well. A negotiated senate amendment coming on this bill will move the boundary back for a picket line to 300 (was 200) feet away from any ingress or egress of the funeral site. Also prohibits an action thirty minutes before and after a service.

5/23/11 – Passed Senate 58-0-0.

5/30/11 – Passed House on concurrence 111-0-0.
Passed both chambers.

HB 1091 – Public Private Partnerships

Rep. Nekritz (D – Des Plaines)/

Sen. Steans (D – Chicago)

NEUTRAL

Creates the Public-Private Partnerships for Transportation Act. Grants to the Illinois Department of Transportation and the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority the necessary powers for the development, financing, and operation of transportation projects through public-private agreements with one or more private entities. Includes protections for prevailing wage and project labor agreements on construction projects. Provides that the toll authority shall not use the proceeds from the sale or lease of existing property (as of the effective date of act) towards a public private partnership. Effective immediately.

4/11/11 – Passed House 66-47-1.

5/20/11 – Passed Senate 33-12-0.

5/28/11 – Passed House 65-40-1 on concurrence.
Passed both chambers.

Calling all Fox Valley union members and allies: Join us in standing up to corporate greed!

Come to Geneva to tell Roquette: "End the Lockout-Bargain in Good Faith" Solidarity Picket & Handbilling

Thursday, June 2, 8:30 am

Roquette Innovation Center
2211 Innovation Dr, Geneva, IL

Directions: Take Hwy. 38 East of Geneva, turn right on Technology Blvd.

Roquette America, a subsidiary of the highly profitable French multinational Roquette Frères, locked out 237 members of BCTGM Local 48G on

September 28, 2010. After just two weeks of surface bargaining, the company presented a "last and final" offer including hundreds of drastic contract changes, ranging from \$4 wage cuts for new hires to allowing replacement of experienced full-time workers with low-paid temps.

Union members unanimously rejected the extreme proposal but offered to work under the old contract while continuing to negotiate. Instead, Roquette locked

workers out in a bid to starve them into accepting a raw deal. Members have maintained a 24-hour picket ever since.

Meanwhile, Roquette recently completed construction of a new "Innovation Center" in Geneva, Illinois. On June 2, BCTGM 48G members and supporters will picket and handbill at Roquette's first major customer workshop scheduled at the Innovation Center. Please join us on June 2!

HB 1355 – Theatre Production Tax Credit

Rep. Dunkin (D – Chicago)/Sen. Hunter (D – Chicago)

NEUTRAL

Creates the Live Theater Production Tax Credit Act. Provides theater producers, owners, licensees, or operators, or who otherwise present live stage presentations within the State, are entitled to a credit against their income tax liability equal to a percentage of their Illinois production spending and Illinois labor expenditures. This bill did not receive a vote on concurrence in the House.

5/30/11 – Passed Senate 36-20-0.

*To House on Calendar Order of Concurrence.***HB 1576 – Firefighter Hiring**

Rep. Dugan (D – Kankakee)/Sen. Koehler (D – Peoria)

SUPPORT

Creates a standardized hiring process for firefighters across the state. Allows local governments to continue the current hiring process at the local level. Sets forth minimum testing requirements for firefighter hiring to ensure only the most qualified candidates are chosen for this very important profession.

5/25/11 – Passed Senate 50-4-0.

5/31/11 – Passed House 116-0-0 on concurrence.

*Passed both chambers.***HB 2902 – Electric Vehicle Council**

Rep. Williams (D – Chicago)/Sen. Garret (D – Highwood)

Monitor

Creates the Electric Vehicle Adoption Act. Authorizes the Director of the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to appoint an Electric Vehicle Coordinator for the State of Illinois who will act as the point person for electric vehicle related policies and activities in the State. Creates the Illinois Electric Vehicle Advisory Council to investigate and recommend strategies that the Governor and the General Assembly may implement to promote the use of electric vehicles.

5/19/11 – Passed Senate 53-0-0.

5/28/11 – Passed House on Concurrence 106-0-0.

*Passed both chambers.***HB 2903 – Electric Vehicle Manufacturing**

Rep. Williams (D – Chicago)/Sen. Steans (D – Chicago)

Monitor

Amends the Alternate Fuels Act. Requires \$500,000 of the amount that is appropriated for rebate programs under the Act during fiscal years 2012 and 2013 to be designated

instead to fund a grant program to support the adoption of electric vehicles powered by solar generation. Authorizes the Environmental Protection Agency in fiscal year 2012 and thereafter, to make a grant of \$500,000 to a not-for-profit car-sharing organization. Effective immediately.

5/23/11 – Passed Senate 56-0-0.

5/31/11 – Passed House on concurrence 116-0-0.

*Passed both chambers.***SB 83 – Water Systems**

Sen. Wilhelmi (D – Crest Hill)/Rep. McAsey (D – Romeoville)

NEUTRAL

Amends the Municipal Code to allow a water system owned by a public utility that provides water to 2 or more municipalities to be acquired by a majority of the municipalities it serves by eminent domain, so long as there is an intergovernmental agreement in existence between the acquiring municipalities. Requires that all work performed on the acquired water system must be done by employees who are members of a collective bargaining unit or by contractors whose employees are members of a collective bargaining unit. The unit recognized must be one that has historically represented those employees.

4/15/11 – Passed Senate 34-21-0.

5/30/11 – Passed House 66-45-3. *Passed both chambers.***SB 115 – Equal Pay Act**

Sen. Sandoval (D – Cicero)/

Rep. Berrios (D – Chicago)

SUPPORT

Amends the Equal Pay Act of 2003. Increases the civil penalty up to \$5,000 for a violation of the Equal Pay Act.

4/15/11 – Passed Senate 36-18-0.

5/27/11 – Passed House 71-45-0. *Passed both chambers.***SB 1578 – Professional Development for School Employees**

Sen. Holmes (D – Aurora)/

Rep. Mussman (D – Schaumburg)

SUPPORT

This legislation will provide access to professional development training for educational support personnel (custodians, teaching assistants, secretaries, bus drivers, cooks, etc) to upgrade their skills and prepare them to assume greater responsibilities in our schools.

5/24/11 – Passed House 118-0-0.

5/27/11 – Passed Senate 57-0-0.

Passed both chambers. ■

Central Labor Council & Community Services Conference – June 27-28

For more information please visit <http://www.ilaf-cio.org/forms/11clcregform.pdf> or contact Amy Nixon at 217-492-2633.