



# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

MARCH 2, 2012

**PUBLISHED FOR LABOR ACTIVISTS BY THE ILLINOIS AFL-CIO**

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*The Illinois General Assembly concluded their business on Thursday afternoon. Both chambers are scheduled to convene on Tuesday, March 6 at noon. Next Friday, March 9, is the deadline in each chamber for members to pass their bills out of committee. Both chambers are scheduled to be in session Tuesday through Friday next week.*

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### House Makes Gloomy Revenue Forecast; Deep Cuts Loom in Key Areas

*Republicans Walk Out of Committee for 15 Minutes*

In a contentious House Revenue Committee meeting on Thursday, Chairman John Bradley introduced an amendment to HR 707 and HJR 68, both sponsored by Speaker Madigan. The resolution sets an estimate of \$33.7 billion available to the state in revenue for FY 13. This estimate is \$546 million higher than the FY 12 estimate. The Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability (COGFA) estimates \$34 billion available for FY 13.

The passage of this resolution is step one in the budget process. It was discussed that another resolution will be introduced to take “X amount” from the \$33.7 billion to pay down pension costs, health care, and “other old bills”. Following the decision to take “X amount off the top” a third and final resolution will be introduced to set a percentage of what is left to be given to each appropriations committee. Those committees will then go about the work of deciding how to spend that money.

Revenue Committee Republicans inexplicably walked out as Bradley introduced the resolutions. They returned a short time later.

One thing is certain to come of this process, and that is deep cuts to education, human services, and public safety funding. Many labor unions and human service groups were present in committee to oppose the passage of the resolutions. No slips were filed in favor of the measures.

These resolutions overwhelmingly passed the House on Thursday. HJR 68 will now go to the Senate for its consideration.

### Senate Labor Committee Passes Certified Payroll Legislation

The Senate Labor Committee met, in the absence of Chairman Gary Forby (D-Benton) due to the tornadoes that ravaged areas of his district, to pass legislation to require contractors and sub-contractors to file their certified payroll on an official form created by the Illinois Department of Labor.

It further requires that the public body in charge of the project shall accept only information on the State of Illinois Certified Transcript as provided by the Department of Labor. SB 3512, sponsored by Senator Althoff (R – Crystal Lake), passed committee 6-3-0.

### Primary Election - March 20

### Early Voting Continues; Labor to Labor Program Kicks Into Gear

Early voting for the Illinois Primary Election continues through March 15 as unions began the Labor to Labor education and GOTV program .

The Illinois AFL-CIO, central bodies and locals are talking member to member about the election through mail, phone and door-to-door activity.

To see the the Illinois AFL-CIO Executive Board endorsements, they can be found at:

<http://www.ilaf-cio.org/political.htm>

### Pat McGuire Replaces Wilhelmi in Senate

Braidwood City Clerk Pat McGuire was named as A.J. Wilhelmi’s replacement in the State Senate Saturday.

McGuire is a former Will County Treasurer and school board member at Joliet Township High School.

The 43rd District’s population base is Joliet.

Wilhelmi resigned to take a position as senior vice president for the Illinois Hospital Association.



## Illinois FMLA Bill Passes House Civil Law Committee

Representative Kelly Cassidy (D – Chicago) was successful in passing legislation that creates the Illinois Family Medical Leave Act, very similar to the federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993. HB 4724 passed the House Judiciary – Civil Law Committee on a party-line vote of 7-4. The legislation guarantees a 12-week unpaid medical leave for workers at companies of 50 or more employees who seek to care for a family member whose health requires assistance. The Illinois legislation expands the federal act by covering those in civil unions. Other bills that passed committee this week:

- HB 4022 (Nekritz) – Requires Class I and Class II railroads to review and submit updated counseling programs on an annual basis. Passed House Transportation 12-0-0.
- HB 4592 (Cunningham) – Does not allow incarcerated individuals in Department of Corrections (DOC) to file a FOIA request for files on DOC staff. Companion bill in Senate passed as well (SB 2902 – Millner) Passed House State Government 15-2-0.
- HB 5531 (Arroyo) – Children of employees (7 years or longer) at State Universities can no longer receive 50% off their tuition. Passed House Executive 9-2-0.
- SB 3665 (J Collins) – Increases penalty on those who attack a letter carrier, postal worker, or a county juvenile detention center employee. Passed Senate Criminal Law Committee 5-4-0. **Please contact your state senator to support this important bill.**
- HR 685 (Yarbrough) – Urges US Postal Service to maintain full postal services in the City of Springfield. Passed House State Government 18-0-0.

## Apprenticeship Report Released

Under the recently enacted State Construction Minority and Female Building Trades Act, all construction apprenticeship programs in Illinois are required to submit a report to the Illinois Department of Labor concerning the race and gender, ethnicity of apprentices participating in their programs. The report is found here (copy into your browser):

<http://www.state.il.us/agency/idol/forms/pdfs/apprenticeship2011.pdf>

Call 217.544.4014 For More Information On These And Other Legislative Issues Important To Working People - [www.ilaf-cio.org](http://www.ilaf-cio.org)

## Election 2012

### Romney Back To Union Bashing; Barely Wins GOP Vote in Michigan

Former Massachusetts Governor and Michigan native Mitt Romney continued to blame unions and their members for a host of society's problems.

In Michigan last week, Romney continued his steady course of bashing unions, this time the UAW.

Romney's comments of "Let Detroit Go Bankrupt" made during the economic freefall of 2008-09 continue to haunt the front-runner. Romney, as recently as last week, still blames unions. He said he considers the Obama-led government rescue of the domestic auto companies to be payback to the unions. A spokesman for the Republican National Committee echoed Romney, saying the auto industry rescue was "an insider deal for his union cronies."

Obama didn't mince words during a speech at the UAW convention in Washington D.C. this week.

"This notion that we should have let the auto industry die, that we should pursue antiworker policies in hopes unions like yours will unravel – it's part of that same old you're-on-your-own philosophy that says we should just leave everyone to fend for themselves. ... (I had to) make the tough calls and do the right thing no matter what the politics."

Meanwhile, the U.S. auto industry continued pacing the economic turnaround adding 38,000 jobs last year and another projected 13,000 this year.

## Save the date

### Illinois AFL-CIO COPE Golf Outing

June 11

Springfield

Call Terri at 217-492-2622 for more information.

### 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Regina V. Polk Women's Labor Leadership Conference

May 30-June 2

University of Illinois-Chicago

Call 312-996-2624 for more information.

