



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

JANUARY 10, 2013

PUBLISHED FOR LABOR ACTIVISTS BY THE ILLINOIS AFL-CIO

MICHAEL T. CARRIGAN, PRESIDENT

TIMOTHY E. DREA, SECRETARY TREASURER

JASON KELLER, LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

House and Senate members returned to Springfield over the course of the past week to close out the 97th General Assembly. While the press reports coming from Springfield will state that not much was accomplished, in reality there was a great amount of work done. The 98th General Assembly met on Thursday for a short time. The House adjourned until Jan. 30, while the Senate returns Feb. 5. General Assembly members will begin introduction of new bills, and we will continue to send those to affiliates to formulate positions.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Lobby Effort Helps Stall Unfair, Unconstitutional Pension Bills

Bill Stripping Collective Bargaining Rights Moves To Governor's Desk

Pensions

Legislative leaders and Governor Pat Quinn continued to meet regarding legislation to address the liability of the state's pension systems. These meetings continued to occur without labor leaders being present. The House sent Senate President John Cullerton's bill HB 1447, impacting State Employees Retirement System (SERS) and General Assembly Retirement System (GARS) – giving members their choice between pension or health care - directly to the House floor for consideration. Supporters could not muster 60 votes for passage in the House. SB 1673, was used by Representative Elaine Nekritz to attempt reforms to the pension systems Tier 1 participants. The bill amongst other things said that Tier 1 retirees shall not receive automatic annual cost of living increases to their retirement annuity until January 1, 2020. This proposal was not called for a vote.

Finally, Quinn came in and attempted a "hail mary" pension pass on January 8. His idea would have created a pension commission to decide changes to the state's pension systems, with little gubernatorial or general assembly oversight. Quinn's "hail mary" pension pass found no receivers. No significant action was taken on pensions; however, it remains a serious issue for the 98th General Assembly.

Mechanics Lien

On Feb. 25, 2011 the Illinois Supreme Court disregarded 170 years of precedent under Section 16 of the Mechanics Lien Act and held that lenders have priority in a property foreclosure both on the value of the land and on the value of improvements erected on the property. The House completed passage of HB 3636 this week to restore the Act to its historical status which will make sure contractors receive priority over banks in obtaining payments for their con-

Continued on next page

22 File for 2nd CD Special

Two State Senators and Two Former Congressmen In Large Field

Seventeen Democrats and five Republicans filed for the Special Congressional Election for the Second District.

Among the filers in the Democrat Primary are: State Senators Toi Hutchinson and Napoleon Harris; former State Rep. Robin Kelly; former State Senator and Congresswoman Debbie Halvorson; former Congressman Mel Reynolds; and Chicago Alderman Anthony Beale.

Kelly won the top position on the ballot in a lottery between those that filed first.

The Second District, located from the south side of Chicago down through Kankakee, is overwhelmingly Democrat and was represented by Congressman Jesse Jackson, Jr. from 1995 until his late November resignation.

The other filers include: Clifford Eagleton (D), Victor Jonathan (D), Gregory Haynes (D), Charles Rayburn (D), John Blyth (D), Ernest Fenton (D), Anthony Williams (D), Fatimah Muhammad (D), Larry Pickens (D), O. Patrick Brutus (D), Joyce Washington (D), Lenny McAllister (R), Beverly Reid (R), Paul McKinley (R), James Taylor, Sr. (R), and Eric Wallace (R).

The Special Election Primary is scheduled for Feb. 26 and the General for April 9, to coincide with the Consolidated Election schedule.



struction projects and putting our members to work. The bill now goes to the Governor for his consideration.

From front page...

Gaming

A Labor-supported gaming expansion bill was passed by the General Assembly on May 31, 2011. On a parliamentary maneuver, Senate President Cullerton filed a motion to reconsider the vote on SB 744. This was done to ensure negotiations with Governor Quinn would continue on the issue. On January 8, 2013 President Cullerton lifted his motion, which means SB 744 will be sent to the Governor for his consideration.

The bill creates five new casinos in the following cities: Chicago, Danville, Rockford, Park City (Waukegan), and in the south suburbs. 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.

Collective Bargaining

As reported last week, the Senate passed SB 1556 effectively stripping collective bargaining rights away from thousands of public employees. Senator Harmon filed a motion to reconsider the vote on SB 1556, holding the bill in the Senate. On Tuesday, January 8, Senator Harmon lifted his motion on the bill which will send the bill to the Governor for his signature.

Temporary Drivers' License

Illinois law requires anyone applying for a driver's license to provide a Social Security number. This law prevents 250,000 Illinois immigrant motorists who cannot get a Social Security

Number from getting licenses—even though they need to drive to support their families. These unlicensed, uninsured drivers cost Illinois motorists \$64 million in damage claims each year. In 2011, 42% of all fatal crashes in Illinois involved an unlicensed driver.

Providing a way for Illinois immigrant motorists to obey driver's license laws will make everyone on our state's roads safer. The General Assembly passed SB 957 during veto and lame duck session that will allow for a temporary license (3 years), but will also require these immigrant drivers to get tested on their driving skills and on the rules of the road, and purchase insurance. The bill goes to the Governor for his consideration.

Home Health Care Workers

The House completed passage of HB 4177 on Sunday, that will help preserve the collective bargaining rights for DHS's home care and home health workers who function as personal care attendants, personal assistants, and individual maintenance home health workers and who work under the Home Services Program under Section 3 of the Disabled Persons Rehabilitation Act. The bill was sent to the Governor on Tuesday for his consideration.

Left Unaccomplished

Lobbying ensued, with no action taken on three issues that will surely come back during the 98th General Assembly. Legislation to regulate the hydraulic fracturing and natural gas industry (SB 3280) was not acted upon. SB 282 would have required certain publicly traded corporations to file income tax returns with the state failed in House Revenue committee 3-6. Lastly, as reported last week a bill (SB 24) to authorize road and transit funds stalled in the Senate last week. The House took no fur-

Contribution Caps Adjusted for State PAC Contributions

Political committee contribution limits were adjusted for inflation Jan. 1 to adhere with state campaign finance law mandating the changes during odd-numbered years. The adjustment is based on the Consumer Price Index.

The new limits are now as follows:

- Candidate Committee (\$5,300 from individual/\$10,500 from corporation, labor organization or association/\$52,600 from a candidate committee or political action committee)
- Political Action Committee (\$10,500 from individual, \$21,100 from corporation, labor organization, political party committee or association)
- Political Party Committee (\$10,500 from individual, \$21,100 from corporation, labor organization, association); for Primary Election Only (\$52,600 from candidate committee, \$52,600 from another political party committee); no limits on transfers between state political party and federal political party committee
- Ballot Initiative Committee (no limits)
- Independent Expenditure Only Committee (no limits, though no direct contributions or coordination)