



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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The Illinois General Assembly concluded their business today. Both chambers will return on Tuesday, March 5. The Senate is scheduled to remain in through Thursday, while the House is scheduled to remain in session through Friday next week. Governor Quinn is scheduled to deliver his budget outline and address to the General Assembly on Wednesday next week. Three weeks remain to pass bills out of committee in their originating chamber.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

General Assembly Begins Week with a Bang, Ends in a Poof

Illinois House Debates Guns and Pensions

The Illinois House came in on Tuesday this week and established the day to debate the conceal/carry issue in Illinois. Back in December 2012 the U.S. Seventh Circuit court of Appeals said the state's ban on carrying a weapon in public is unconstitutional, and gave the General Assembly 180 days to pass their own version of conceal/carry. The debate on HB 1155 (Phelps) took approximately nine hours, included 31 different amendments being filed, 11 of which were adopted. The bill itself did not receive a vote for final passage.

Thursday was pension day in the House. Speaker Madigan filed and sent four amendments directly to the House floor for consideration. The House Republicans did not cast a single vote on any of these amendments.

- HB 1154, HA #1 (Eliminates COLAs) – Failed by a vote of 2 yes votes (Madigan & Jefferson) – 66 no votes.
- HB 1154, HA #2 (Eliminates COLAs unless pension system is 80% funded) – Failed by a vote of 5 yes votes (Madigan, Nekritz, Jefferson, Zalewski, & Hurley) – 62 no votes.
- HB 1165, HA #1 (Increases retirement ages to 67) – Failed by a vote of 1 yes vote (Madigan) to 66 no votes.
- HB 1166, HA #1 (Increases employee contributions by 5%) – Failed by a vote of 3 yes votes (Madigan, Jefferson, Nekritz) to 61 no votes.

It is important to note that these votes were on adopting the amendments. The bills themselves remain on second reading and can be amended with one hour notice.

In other legislative action this week:

- SB 10 (Steans/G Harris) – Marriage Equality bill passed House Executive Committee late Tuesday evening. Passed Committee 6-5. Second Reading.
- SB 26 (Steans/Feigenholz) – Expansion of health care for 342,000 low-income residents, which tracks with what was passed in Obamacare, to give medical coverage to more people. The federal government will reimburse Illinois 100% for new enrollees through 2017, after which time the reimbursement rate will gradually decrease. Passed Senate 40-19.
- SB 30 (Jacobs) – Cedes to the United States concurrent jurisdiction over the Thomson United States Penitentiary. Passed the Senate 49-5-0.
- HB 140 (Franks) Eliminates compensation, as well as pension and group insurance benefits, for individuals who first become members of the Regional Transportation Authority Board, Suburban Bus Board, Commuter Rail Board, or Chicago Transit Authority Board on or after the effective date of the amendatory Act. Passed House Mass Transit 15-5. Second Reading.
- Both House and Senate Labor Committees canceled their scheduled hearings this week.
- AM 455 – Confirmed William Potts (SEIU) to Employment Security Advisory Board.
- AM 456 – Confirmed Roderick Bashir (SEIU) to Illinois State Board of Investment.
- AM 503 – Confirmed Brandon Zanotti as Arbitrator on Work Comp Commission.

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- AM 504 – Confirmed Nancy Beth Lindsay as Arbitrator on Work Comp Commission.
- AM 505 – Confirmed Doug Holland as Arbitrator on Work Comp Commission.
- AM 506 – Confirmed George J. Andros as Arbitrator on Work Comp Commission.
- AM 507 – Confirmed Gerald Granada as Arbitrator on Work Comp Commission.
- AM 508 – Confirmed Peter O'Malley as Arbitrator on Work Comp Commission.
- AM 510 – Confirmed Stephen Mathis as Arbitrator on Work Comp Commission.
- AM 512 – Confirmed Maureen Pulia as Arbitrator on Work Comp Commission.
- AM 518 – Confirmed Paul Schaefer (UFCW) as member of Lottery Control Board.
- AM 546 – Confirmed Mike Everett (IBEW) as member of the Tri-County River Valley Development Authority Board.
- AM 556 – Confirmed Jerry O'Leary (UA) to Pollution Control Board.

Link Loses Bid for Waukegan Mayor

State Sen. Terry Link (D-Waukegan) lost in his bid to become Mayor of Waukegan. Link fell in the Democratic Primary Election to current City Clerk Wayne Motley.

Link had a number of local union endorsements and the Northeastern Illinois Labor Federation's strong support. The state AFL-CIO assisted the campaign with GOTV efforts.

AFSCME, GOV. QUINN ANNOUNCE TENTATIVE CONTRACT AGREEMENT

Negotiators send proposed three-year agreement to AFSCME members for ratification

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Council 31 and the Quinn Administration have reached a tentative agreement on a new union contract covering some 35,000 state employees. Negotiations have been ongoing for more than 15 months.

"At a time when the state is facing unprecedented financial challenges, this agreement is fair to both hard-working state employees and all taxpayers of Illinois," Governor Pat Quinn said. "I want to thank the women and men who have stayed at the table for more than a year for their commitment to reaching an agreement."

"AFSCME is very pleased that we were able to reach an agreement that protects our members' standard of living, and is fair to them and all Illinois citizens, even in these very challenging economic times," AFSCME Council 31 executive director Henry Bayer said.

AFSCME members must ratify any contract negotiated by their elected bargaining representatives. The ratification process will get underway at worksites statewide during the week of March 4.

Details of the tentative agreement will be released after the union's membership has had the opportunity to review it.

AFL-CIO Executive Council meets for Winter Meetings

The National AFL-CIO's Executive Council met this past week and adopted several resolutions. The resolutions called for a "high-wage" economic strategy, a new trade model and universal voter registration coupled with vigorous protection. The Executive Council also addressed gender equality and commemorated the 50th anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s March on Washington. The Council also adopted a resolution giving a strong endorsement of support for construction of crude oil pipelines.

The meeting began with AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka issuing a charter to SMART (Sheet Metal Air Rail and Transportation Workers). SMART was formed by the merger of the Sheet Metal Workers and the United Transportation Union.

The Executive Council also adopted a resolution that requires State Federations and Large Central Labor Councils (CLC's) to develop strategic campaign plans; require all State Federations and CLC's to submit quarterly financial reports to the National AFL-CIO; require State Federations and CLC's to develop community engagement programs with the assistance of the AFL-CIO; and the National AFL-CIO will work with State Federations and CLC's to develop accountability programs and strategies to increase affiliation.

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GOVERNOR REAPPOINTS LABOR BOARD

Board to be operated under the Illinois Department of Labor

According to a statement released to the Illinois AFL-CIO by the Illinois Department of Labor: The Labor Advisory Board (LAB) is comprised of 13 members representing labor, management and the public who are appointed by the Governor. The purpose of the Board is to provide a forum for interested parties to discuss issues affecting Illinois workers, including labor laws administered and enforced by the Department. The Board advises the Director of Labor regarding labor policy and enforcement of laws, reviews statutes enforced by the Department and provides recommendations regarding the Department's administrative regulations.

The Department is currently working on scheduling the first Board Meeting. We anticipate the first meeting to take place sometime towards the end of March or early part of April. The Board will meet on a quarterly basis.

The members appointed by the Governor this week include:

AM 56 - Jorge Ramirez to be a member of the Department of Labor Advisory Board.

AM 57 - Heather Goines to be a member of the Department of Labor Advisory Board.

AM 58 - Tina Harbin to be a member of the Department of Labor Advisory Board.

AM 59 - Mark Guethle to be a member of the Department of Labor Advisory Board.

AM 60 - Maria Bocanegra to be a member of the Department of Labor Advisory Board.

AM 61 - Brian Glynn to be a member of the Department of Labor Advisory Board.

AM 62 - Ralph Graham to be a member of the Department of Labor Advisory Board.

AM 63 - Roberto Carmona to be a member of the Department of Labor Advisory Board.

AM 64 - John F. Penn to be a member of the Department of Labor Advisory Board.

AM 65 - Larry Swope to be a member of the Department of Labor Advisory Board.

AM 66 - Marc Poulos to be a member of the Department of Labor Advisory Board.

AM 67 - Bruce Holland to be a member of the Department of Labor Advisory Board.

AM 68 - Kim Bobo to be a member of the Department of Labor Advisory Board

These appointments will still need Senate approval.

Kelly Wins Special Congressional Primary Election

Former state representative Robin Kelly easily won the Democratic Primary in the special election to fill the vacancy left by Jesse Jackson Jr. Kelly had 52 percent of the small turnout vote, outdistancing former congresswoman Debbie Halvorson (25 percent) and Chicago alderman Anthony Beale (11 percent).

Kelly will now run in the Special General Election on April 9 against Paul McKinley, a convicted felon, in this heavily Democratic district. Kelly will replace Jackson, Jr. who resigned last year ahead of pleading guilty in February to federal charges of spending campaign contributions on personal items.

Turnout was low, as expected, with around 15 percent of voters showing for the election in Chicago and suburban Cook County. This was exacerbated by a winter storm that hit the Chicago area on Election Day.

In the run-up to the election several Democrat candidates withdrew including State Senators Donne Trotter, Napoleon Harris and Toi Hutchinson. New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg spent millions from his anti-gun Super PAC to affect the outcome in this race.

Kelly served as a state representative in the General Assembly until 2005. She earned a 96 percent Labor voting record.