



# SENATE IN REVIEW

A LOOK AT THE 2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS  
OF THE ILLINOIS SENATE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS

**JOHN J. CULLERTON, SENATE PRESIDENT**

*Communications Department • [www.IllinoisSenateDemocrats.com](http://www.IllinoisSenateDemocrats.com)*







Senators,

It's been the department's honor to serve and support you in this new era of divided government. In an ever more challenging political and media climate, together we helped put a face on the governor's budget cuts, set new records in our social media engagement and continued to advance the leadership role of the members of the Senate Democratic Caucus.

In order to produce this packet, we had to go to press before the session ended, so a few of your accomplishments and issues may have been missed. In the days ahead, we will produce a final, updated digital edition.

And while May 31 signifies the end of the legislative session, it marks the start of our efforts to work with you in your districts through job fairs, town halls and a litany of other events, which we look forward to working with you to produce in the weeks and months ahead.

Brandy Renfro  
Communications Director

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# SENATE IN REVIEW

LEGISLATIVE  
ACCOMPLISHMENTS









# Legislative accomplishments

As Illinois' governor held the state budget hostage in pursuit of measures designed to weaken the economy and the state's middle and lower classes, Illinois Senate Democrats united to champion causes that are important to working families and individuals throughout the state.

Efforts to address school funding reform, collective bargaining rights, fair wages, higher education funding, services for the poor and disadvantaged and expanded access to the ballot box all marked Senate Democrats' continued push for a progressive state government that is accountable and responsive to the wishes of the citizens of Illinois.

With state government on autopilot and inching closer to a shutdown under Gov. Bruce Rauner, Senate Democrats stood firm on their priorities, including protection of the middle class and vital state services, while also working to bring attention to the budget crisis and the reasons behind it.



*Senators and students deliver Senate legislation to the governor's office that would fund the Monetary Award Program.*

## College tuition grants

Senate Democrats spent the better part of the year trying to give Gov. Rauner the ability to keep the state's promises to college students who were assured they would receive state tuition assistance.

Gov. Rauner, however, repeatedly vetoed those efforts outright.

In February, a group of lawmakers and college students, led by Senator Donne Trotter of Chicago, personally delivered to the governor's office Senate legislation to fund the Monetary Award Program – the state's leading financial aid program for college students. Some 130,000 students would have benefited from the legislation had the governor signed it.

It also would have relieved pressure on the state's public and private colleges and universities that tried to help students stay in school by fronting the MAP money in the absence of promised grant payments.

"MAP grants are absolutely vital to thousands of students across Illinois. Eliminating these funds is short-sighted and will have a long-term impact both on students and our state economy," said Des Plaines Senator Laura Murphy, who helped to deliver the legislation to the governor's office.

Senate Democrats also voted repeatedly to send funding directly for operations at Illinois colleges and universities, which are being starved and forced to look at program cuts and layoffs statewide because of the budget stalemate.

## Advocates for at-risk populations

Among those most severely affected by the governor's hostage-taking approach to the budget were human service agencies that provide state services to Illinois' poorest and most disadvantaged residents.



Recognizing the need to prioritize services for people who need a hand up, Senate Democrats repeatedly voted to send funding to these agencies so they might continue their programs. Gov. Rauner repeatedly rejected these efforts.

Thousands of agencies with state contracts were dealt a blow when the governor stopped paying them in July 2015. Many either shuttered when they ran out of money or dramatically reduced programs and laid off employees in an attempt to continue operating on shoestring budgets in the absence of state payments.

Affected were services for impoverished women, children, senior citizens, rape victims, the homeless, at-risk youth and the mentally ill. Also affected were the employees who work for the agencies to provide services in every region of the state.

For example, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois in January announced plans to close 30 programs and eliminate 43 percent of its workforce because of the stalemate. The result was that 4,700 Illinoisans no longer would receive services from the 149-year-old organization.

Many lawmakers worried about the continued unraveling of the state's human services network and whether it could be saved once providers close their doors, vital services are eliminated and skilled professionals find employment elsewhere – all because of Gov. Rauner's single-minded pursuit of an anti-middle-class agenda for Illinois.

"None of the other issues Gov. Rauner continues to bring forth – attacks on unions, workers compensation and lawsuit reform, term limits, etc. – are priorities today," said Evanston Senator Daniel Biss, chairman of the Senate's Human Services Committee. "Illinois needs a budget now. Without one, the state will continue to inflict harm on vulnerable residents in need of help and those who try to offer it."

## School funding reform

Growing disparities in state funding for Illinois' public school districts prompted Senate Democrats to aggressively advocate for a fair method of distributing state money to school districts.

Illinois' current formula, which has not been updated since 1997, fails to account for such important factors in the cost of educating students as concentrations of poverty and significant numbers of non-English-speaking students.

The result is that schools in many communities where the local economy is sputtering do not get as much state support as schools in communities with greater property wealth and robust local economies.

Measures introduced by Senate Democrats sought to change that by sending more state money to struggling schools.

Senate President John Cullerton, during a speech before the City Club of Chicago in January, called unfair school funding the defining crisis of our time.

"There's an injustice we've tolerated too long, one that crushes dreams, stifles growth and keeps us, as a state, from moving forward," Cullerton said. "It is Illinois' system of funding public schools — a system that shackles poor communities to poor expectations while rewarding the affluent with even



*Senate President John Cullerton addresses the City Club of Chicago regarding fixes to the current unfair school funding formula.*





greater resources. It can be tolerated no longer.”

Senator Andy Manar of Bunker Hill traveled the state speaking to school superintendents, parents, students, taxpayers, educators and others about the need for a fair funding formula. His efforts and those of other advocates resulted in a groundswell of support for an overhaul of the state’s outdated school funding formula.

Senator Kimberly Lightford of Chicago also supported school funding reform and introduced a plan that would establish funding model that relies on evidence and accountability in determining the actual cost of educating children in districts throughout Illinois.



*Senators Don Harmon, John Mulroe, Heather Steans, Bill Cunningham and Gary Forby at AFSCME Day rally, May 18th*

## Arbitration bill

Senate Democrats undertook efforts to protect state services and government employees from the potentially detrimental effects of a strike or lockout in the event an impasse occurs in contract negotiations between Gov. Rauner and Illinois’ largest state employee union.

Legislation sponsored by Senator Don Harmon of Oak Park would have allowed the use of binding interest arbitration when the state and employees can’t come to terms on union contract negotiations.

“I am concerned about the inability of the state and AFSCME to come to terms on a contract and what that could mean for state operations, particularly in light of Gov. Rauner’s past comments that he is willing to shut down the government to make a point with unions,” Harmon said.

“A strike or lockout of thousands of workers throughout Illinois is not good for businesses – from daycare centers and grocery stores to banks and utility companies – nor is it responsible to the taxpayers who expect the state services they pay for.”

The state and employees represented by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, or AFSCME, have been without a contract since it expired June 30, 2015. In addition to AFSCME, the governor’s office has not reached a deal with dozens of other state employee unions whose contracts have been under negotiation.

Under the Senate Democrats’ proposal, interest arbitration would have been an optional tool to bring moderation to labor talks and offer both sides an incentive to stay at the table, rather than go to a strike or a lockout. It would not have forced any particular outcomes to negotiations, nor would it have cost the state any additional money.

Gov. Rauner lobbied lawmakers to oppose the legislation, which he twice vetoed.









# SENATE IN REVIEW

SPREADING  
THE NEWS









VOICE, a constituent relationship management database, provides our caucus with a uniform system to track important issues and communicate with the people back in district. The system offers a variety of tools to assess constituent requests, opinions and manage casework for legislative assistants and district office staff.

As a result, staff in district and the Capitol can instantaneously identify important issues and proactively communicate with constituents based on their concerns and interests, all the while steadily growing targeted and general e-newsletter lists.

Since last year, VOICE has logged more than 365,864 emails, web forms, phone calls and letters. Currently, there are 38 legislative assistants and 28 district offices using VOICE.

## By the numbers...

This year VOICE has...

- Sent out e-newsletters and targeted e-blasts to 3,448,631 constituents.
- Sent out 50,286 emails and 1,724 letters to constituents.

Here is a snapshot of incoming constituent correspondence:

Method	Number of Incoming Correspondence
Email	337,480
Web forms	23,565
Letters	2,753
Phone calls	1,771
Faxes	295
<b>Total</b>	<b>365,864</b>

## Top 10 issues for this session:

- Budget: 6,254
- Energy: 5,199
- Taxes: 4,370
- Education: 3,931
- Healthcare: 1,797
- Pensions: 1,024
- Labor: 925
- Gaming: 911
- Child Care Assistance Program-Support: 822
- Consumer Issues: 708

## Tele-Town Hall meetings

This year, senators participated in telephone town halls reaching a total of 385,000 people. The senators were given the ability to reach thousands of people with a single phone call, engaging them in a lively talk show format. The average number of participants was 4,389. Senator Manar had the most successful call this year with a total of 10,308 people. The budget impasse dominated most of the calls. We look forward to continuing to offer this service next year.

Tele-Town Halls	
Total called	385,000
Active participants	48,272
Live questions	128

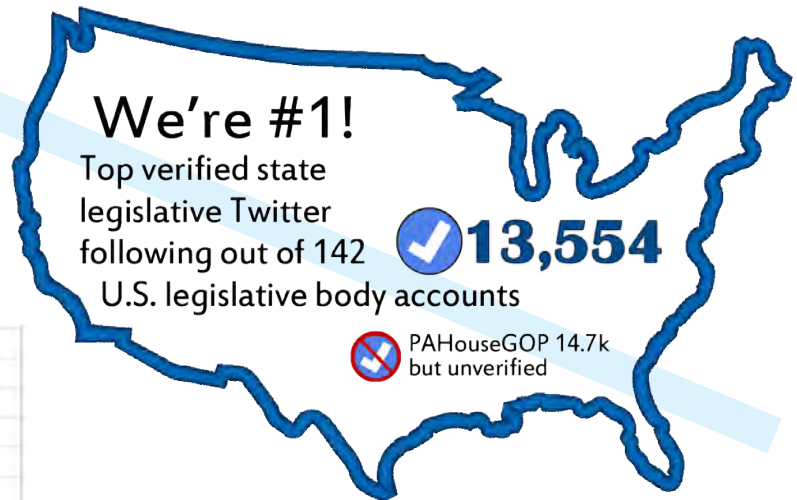
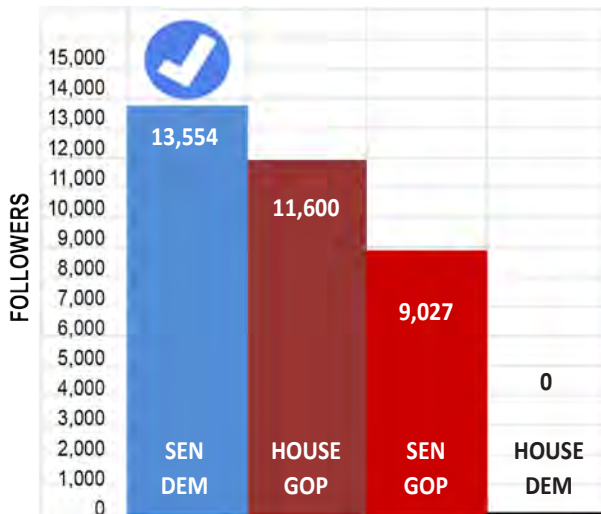


# Illinois Senate Democrats Online: 2015-16 Results



Twitter

Followers: ILSenateDems	13,554
ILHouseGOP	11,600
ILSenateGOP	9,027
ILHouseDems	0



## TOP 3 TWEETS OF 2016

		Retweets	Favorites	Reach
02/16	A second chance for students: Senate delivers #MAP plan to Gov. Rauner today	103	168	1,687,907
02/17	Students chant during governor's Budget Address #MAPMatters	56	42	78,995
04/16	@SenatorHolmes welcomes @beaglefreedom for SB 2356 for homes for former research animals #puppies	45	71	50,050

## TOP IL POLITICAL MEDIA ON TWITTER

IllinoisPolicy	34,594
Capitolfax	16,650
ILSenDems	<b>13,554</b>
GregHinz	12,100
ChiTribCloutSt	9,625
AmandaVinicky	9,461
Trib_ed_board	9,422
Capitolbureau	8,774
SJRthedome	7,416
DHStatehouse	6,421



YouTube



**THIS YEAR:**  
We increased use of photos,  
the most engaging content.



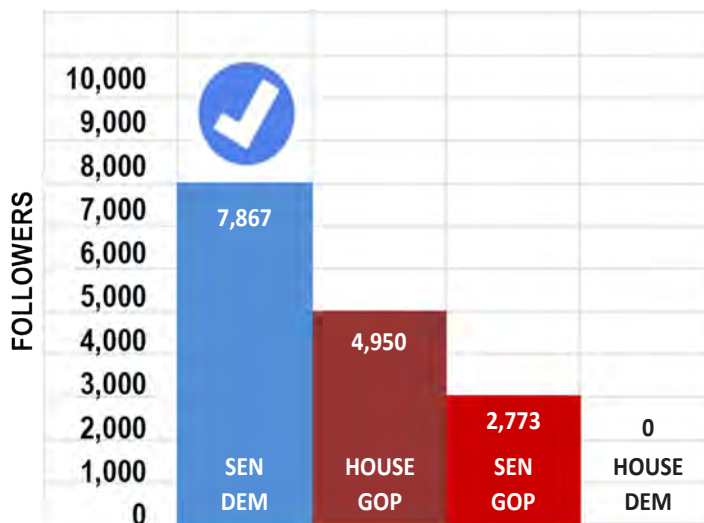


Facebook



33 members, caucus and ILikellinois are verified accounts

Followers: ILSenateDems 7,867  
ILHouseGOP 4,950  
ILSenateGOP 2,773  
ILHouseDems 0



IllinoisSenateDemocrats.com

77,908 ISDC total pageviews #1: New Laws 2016

637,024 All sites total pageviews

13,216 Facebook 90%+ for all sites

5,800 Twitter

532 SlideShare (New Laws)

334 LinkedIn

referrals to website from



LinkedIn

409 followers



Instagram



IL Senate Democrats

Photos from the Democratic caucus of the Illinois State Senate. Likes are not endorsements.  
www.illinoisenatedemocrats.com



Soundcloud

New in 2016

2,252 plays

Most played tracks:

Manar speaks about SB 321 -- 645 plays

Bush speaks against "Tampon Tax" -- 278 plays

Cullerton on Leaders' Meeting -- 113 plays



THIS YEAR:

We increased account **verifications on Twitter** and Facebook



# Continuing Latino media outreach

Organizing major press events, creating stories for television news networks, running opinion columns in newspapers and posting stories on the web and social media were major parts of the Latino/Spanish language multiplatform outreach.

Senators Iris Y. Martinez, Michael Noland and William Delgado helped the Latino Treatment Center, a substance abuse non-profit, access state funding which allowed them to keep their doors open. The news was delivered at a press conference in Elgin, which all major Spanish language news outlets, the Chicago Tribune and the Daily Herald attended. The news stories produced by this coverage reached hundreds of thousands of people across the Chicagoland area. This was also the first off-campus press conference to be streamed live over the internet.

Effectively relating our legislative agenda to our constituents is crucial to our outreach strategy. Based on this premise, we worked side by side with television news networks to produce feature stories on relevant legislation. Senator Andy Manar's education financing reform plan, Senator Daniel Biss's gay therapy conversion ban and President John J. Cullerton's bill to allow Dreamers to practice law in Illinois showcased how we work to improve the lives of the people of Illinois.

In the fast-paced world we live in, the ability to communicate our accomplishments in real time is vital. That is why the Latino-Spanish language outreach deployed a mobile unit to shoot professional videos and pictures to send to television newscasts. This content also boosted our office's social media and web outreach.

Latinos are the fastest growing demographic group in the United States. The Illinois Senate Democratic Caucus works with diligence to meet the communication needs of this constituency.









ILBC includes Senators Kimberly A. Lightford (ILBC chairman/Assistant Majority Leader), Emil Jones III (Senate chairman), James F. Clayborne (Majority Leader), Donne Trotter (Assistant Majority Leader), Mattie Hunter (Majority Caucus Whip), Jacqueline Y. Collins, Napoleon Harris, Toi Hutchinson, Kwame Raoul and Patricia Van Pelt.

# Senate Black Caucus: Standing up for communities of color

The senators of the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus upheld their commitment to create equal opportunities for all minorities and vulnerable communities. They worked together as a singular voice to promote their mission of fighting for social justice, criminal justice reform, health and welfare, education, employment and entrepreneurship.

Amid an unprecedented budget impasse, Black Caucus Chairman Kimberly A. Lightford commissioned a study to find the impact on communities of color. The study found that the services that helped minorities, such as after-school care, violence prevention programs, youth jobs, early childhood education, state-funded scholarships and senior

care, were targeted for cuts in the governor's proposal.

Members rallied with concerned residents after the governor's budget address and State of the State address to protest cuts to the Child Care Assistance Program and Low Income Heating and Energy Assistance Program and reductions of state aid to public universities.

ILBC Senate Chairman Emil Jones III, along with Leader Donne Trotter, held numerous statewide rallies to prevent Chicago State University and public colleges from closing their doors and laying off workers.

Trotter marched with students to deliver a proposal to fund community colleges and Monetary Award Program grant recipients

to the governor's desk. After the governor vetoed the measure, ILBC members applied pressure on members of the General Assembly to continue to pass budget plans that protected students until both chambers passed a proposal to prevent nine public universities from shutting down.

Black Caucus members also protected the well-being of underserved communities. Senators Trotter and Jacqueline Y. Collins proactively led the charge against lead contamination in Illinois after the crisis in Flint, Michigan, raised national attention to the issue. The proposals would prevent the leasing of apartments with known high levels of the hazardous metal and ensure a higher water quality for communities. Minorities and low-income residents disproportionately live in buildings built before 1978, putting them at higher risk of being exposed to the dangerous material.

SINCE THE FIRST PRESENCE OF AN AFRICAN-AMERICAN IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES IN 1876, 157 AFRICAN-AMERICAN LEGISLATORS HAVE BEEN ELECTED TO SERVE IN THE HOUSE AND SENATE.





Improving the state's public health and workplace policies is another top priority of the caucus. Nearly 45 percent of private-sector workers in Illinois do not receive paid sick days. Senator Toi Hutchinson addressed this need by creating a plan to require employers to provide up to seven paid sick days per year to employees.

Hutchinson also worked to improve quality of life for women with legislation to require insurance companies to cover and provide up to 12 months of contraceptives at one time for women.

The ILBC continued to stand up for the rights of women, communities of color and the most vulnerable this year. Caucus members backed Hutchinson's plan to require employers to allow the family member of or victim of domestic or sexual violence to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave during a year to recover from that violence.

Leader Lightford also passed a plan to improve the state's public health policies. Under her legislation, the Department of Public Health must add social and emotional screenings to its health examinations to identify potential mental health problems in school-age children.

Senators Patricia Van Pelt and Jacqueline Y. Collins supported a plan to mitigate prison sentences for sufferers of mental illness. More than 6,000 Illinoisans with serious mental illness are incarcerated. The measure would assist in reducing that number by allowing courts to consider the mental health of defendants in lessening an imprisonment sentence.

The ILBC also led measures in response to national discussions around the mistreatment of minorities. In Missouri, officials attempted to restrict the First Amendment rights of student athletes who spoke out against racism on campus. Former NFL player Senator Napoleon Harris



proactively created the Campus Demonstration Act to protect freedom of speech on campuses in Illinois. The legislation would prohibit colleges from revoking athletic and academic scholarships as a result of protesting.

Senator Kwame Raoul and Patricia Van Pelt sponsored plans to address juvenile justice reforms. Senator Raoul worked on legislation that prevents youth with minor, non-violent offenses from being committed to a juvenile justice facility.

Thanks to Senator Van Pelt, children in police custody for certain crimes would have greater protection when being interrogated by police. She passed Senate Bill 2370, with bipartisan support, to require any child 15 or younger to have an attorney present during custodial interrogations by police

when accused of murder and sex offenses. It also would require police to recite a simplified Miranda warning for youth.

Job creation and minority enterprise remained at the forefront of the ILBC's legislative agenda. Former wards of the state will soon have access to internships and potential employment opportunities thanks to Senator Mattie Hunter's Foster Youth Summer Internship Program.

Senator Harris also fought to make sure small business owners and subcontractors receive their pay on time. In partnership with other legislators, he traveled the state to create opportunities for small businesses, youth and to spur economic development in minority communities.

Leader James Clayborne created public policy that would promote businesses owned by minorities, women and people with disabilities.

The ILBC supported major statewide reforms, including drawing political district maps in a fairer manner, bringing automatic voter registration to Illinois, supporting K-12 education funding reform and increasing youth participation in the legislative process. For the second year, the caucus hosted its annual Civic Engagement Day by bringing nearly 600 high school students from across the state to the Capitol.



*Senators Martin Sandoval, Iris Y. Martinez (Majority Caucus Whip), Antonio Munoz (Assistant Majority Leader) and William Delgado.*

# Senate Latino Caucus: Fighting for Latino communities

The members of the Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus maintained their unrelenting commitment to improving the quality of life for Latino residents and the people of Illinois as a whole. Members were vocal on issues dealing with higher education, social justice, health, education and criminal justice.

When thousands of children were at risk of losing health insurance, Senate Latino Caucus Chair Iris Y. Martinez stepped in to make sure their coverage was extended. Covering All Kids provides health insurance to children who can't access other health care plans and whose family income is between 209 and 318 percent of the Federal Poverty Level.

Extending the Covering All Kids Health Insurance Act prevented more than 40,000 children,

regardless of their legal status, from losing health insurance. The program receives an annual \$40 million federal match that reduces its already modest cost to the state.

Faced with financial struggles due to an unprecedented budget impasse, the Latino Treatment Center's Elgin facility reached out to Senators William Delgado and Martinez to help obtain the funds they needed to stay open. They worked with LTC executive Director Adriana Trino and other legislators to urge Governor Rauner and his administration to release the dollars the facility desperately needed.

LTC has bilingual staff and evaluates and serves those in the Hispanic community by conducting evaluations for alcohol and drugs in either Spanish or English. Its staff

specializes in outpatient treatment for substance abuse, treatment for families, individual and group counseling and adolescent treatment. They center provides assistance to people in Cook, DuPage and Kane counties.

Latino legislators were focused on the wellbeing of Latino communities and they were also attentive to concerns brought about by the young people. Empowered by his Mexican heritage and an idea brought forward by students at Solorio Academy High School, Senator Martin Sandoval commanded legislation that replaces the word "alien" with "undocumented immigrant" in Illinois law.

Acknowledging that the term "illegal alien" is a bigoted label from a bygone era, Sandoval's proposal would officially make





the change in state laws. Sandoval and the students' efforts come as Latino issues and communities are at a crossroads. Increasingly hateful speech in political circles has targeted immigrant communities and sought to blame them for economic woes even as studies show they are a vital contributor to our nation's economy.

Illinois lawmakers have, in recent years, taken action to update the state's laws to better reflect terminology and remove offensive labels. For instance, in 2011, lawmakers voted to remove the term "mental retardation" in law books and replace it with "intellectual disability." That same year, the term "crippled" was eliminated in favor of "physically disabled."

After fighting for our nation, many veterans struggle to integrate back into society and can develop substance abuse issues and legal problems. Some of these veterans, despite having legal permanent residence prior to serving in the Armed Forces, are deported to Mexico.

Recognizing that anyone who puts his or her life on the line for our country deserves the benefits that come with serving in our military, Assistant Majority Leader Antonio "Tony" Munoz sponsored a resolution that calls for limiting the deportation of veterans who are immigrants and urges Congress to pass the "Restoring Respect for Immigrant Service in Uniform Act."

The congressional measure

would prevent the deportation of veterans who have not committed a felony or significant misdemeanor. Additionally, it urges the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to allow veterans to be readmitted to the United States if they have not committed a serious crime.

Senator Martinez also joined efforts in drawing attention to the mistreatment of these veterans by sponsoring a resolution encouraging the President of the United States and members of Congress to return veterans, who have been deported, to their families and communities in the United States.

Latino members believe in the importance of keeping families together and have historically fought for measures that provide services for undocumented people like healthcare for children, drivers' licenses, allowing undocumented lawyers to practice and the list carries on.

This year, Senator Martinez worked on a measure that would give undocumented students a fair shot to afford college. Dubbed

the "Student Access Bill," it would make undocumented students meeting the conditions necessary to be deemed Illinois residents for tuition purposes eligible to access state-based financial aid at Illinois' four-year public universities.

It is estimated that 1,500 students from Illinois' four-year public universities would receive new scholarship opportunities creating support for a group of students constantly striving for a higher education, but offered few means to achieve one. Financial aid includes any state aid or benefit funded or administered by the state, state agencies or public institutions and universities, such as scholarships, grants, awards and room and board.

The Latino community continues to grow, and with the support of Latino legislators Illinois is poised to provide a flourishing environment for those communities.











# SENATE IN REVIEW

FEATURED  
STORIES









# Munoz helps service members get college credit for military courses

SPRINGFIELD - Service members looking to obtain college credit for military courses may soon have an easier process when transferring credits to a public university or community college in Illinois, under a Senate plan that was approved in committee today.

The proposal, which passed the Higher Education Committee unanimously, requires the state's public universities and community colleges to develop a written policy for awarding

college credit for military courses taken through the Armed Forces.

"Providing our service members accessibility to higher education is a priority to our state and country," said State Senator Antonio "Tony" Munoz (D-Chicago), an Army veteran. "We want to continue this trend by offering students a clear understanding of how their military courses transfer into our state's universities and community colleges."

Schools would use the

Joint Services Transcript, a synchronized transcript presenting data for the United States Army, Marine Corp, Navy and Coast Guard, to determine areas where college credit is applicable and interpret the number of hours the institution would credit.

Senate Bill 2960 will now be considered in the House.



# Steans' plan to decriminalize marijuana possession goes to governor



State Senator Heather Steans (D-Chicago 7th) secured Senate passage in April of legislation that decriminalizes the possession of 10 grams or less of cannabis, instead making it a civil violation statewide while still giving local governments discretion to impose additional fines or drug treatment requirements. That measure, which now reflects the governor's stated concerns when he vetoed a previous effort, passed in the House yesterday.

"The criminal prosecution of marijuana possession has become a festering site of inequity in Illinois, and we believe there's a better way," Steans said. "Although substantially the same percentage of African-American and white individuals use marijuana, black Illinoisans are arrested for

cannabis possession at seven times the rate of white residents."

"Making possession of small amounts of marijuana a civil rather than a criminal offense will free up law enforcement resources and allow us to focus on offering drug treatment alternatives rather than disproportionately arresting and incarcerating people who already face disadvantages."

The legislation also realigns standards used to determine whether a driver is under the influence of cannabis. Because THC, the compound in marijuana that produces its characteristic "high," can remain in a person's bloodstream long after he or she is no longer impaired, there is a need to redefine the threshold in order to ensure that drivers are being tested for their current level

of impairment rather than their past usage. The new standard would mirror the current law regarding blood alcohol levels.

Currently, possession of up to 2.5 grams of cannabis is a Class C misdemeanor, while possession of between 2.5 and 10 grams of the substance is considered a Class B misdemeanor. Almost 50,000 Illinoisans are arrested for cannabis possession each year. Under Steans' proposal, possession of up to 10 grams would be a civil violation punishable by a fine of between \$100 and \$200. The state's local governments, more than 100 of which have already passed some criminal penalties for cannabis possession, would be able to assess additional fines and conditions, such as a requirement that the violator enter a drug treatment program, but could not impose criminal penalties. Records of cannabis-related civil violations would be automatically expunged each year.

Senate Bill 2228 passed the Senate by a vote of 40-14 in April and the House by 64-50 and now goes to the governor.





# Students, Sandoval want ugly “alien” label out of state law books

CHICAGO – Calling the term “illegal alien” a bigoted label from a bygone era, local high school students and state Senator Martin Sandoval are pushing legislation to replace “alien” with “undocumented immigrant” in Illinois law books.

“The word ‘alien’ is really offensive. It’s not just rude but it dehumanizes undocumented people, and that’s not right,” said Uriel Hernandez a ninth grader at Solorio Academy High School.

“All workers, documented or undocumented, pay taxes and do their fair share, so there is no such thing as an “Illegal” person,” added fellow ninth grader Delila Lopez.

Students at Solorio Academy took up the issue and brought it to Sandoval’s attention. The academy is in Gage Park, which is home to one of the highest undocumented immigrant populations in Illinois.

In turn, Sandoval sponsored Senate Bill 3021, which would officially make the change in all state laws. The Senate could take up his proposal as early as this week.

“These are words bigots use to label people. We need to move past these bygone eras of racism and bigotry and recognize the reality around us. Let’s stop labeling and start welcoming our neighbors and co-workers,” said



Sandoval.

Sandoval and the students’ efforts come as Latino issues and communities are at a crossroads. Increasingly hateful speech in political circles has targeted immigrant communities and sought to blame them for economic woes even as studies show they are a vital contributor to our nation’s economy.

Meanwhile, the perception that undocumented immigrants “strengthen the country” has steadily been on the rise among all adults since 2010, according to a 2015 Pew Research Center survey. More than 70 percent of those surveyed said they think undocumented immigrants should be allowed to remain in the U.S., as long as they meet certain requirements.

Outside Illinois law books, the term has been on its way out for quite some time. A 2013 Pew Research Center survey showed that media organizations have largely stopped using the phrase.

Illinois isn’t the only state taking up this issue. California recently voted to remove “alien” from its law books. And Illinois lawmakers have, in recent years, taken action to update the state’s laws to better reflect terminology and remove offensive labels.

For instance, in 2011, lawmakers voted to remove the term “mental retardation” in law books and replace it with “intellectual disability.” That same year, the term “crippled” was eliminated in favor of “physically disabled.”



# Mulroe won't quit stopping smoking

SPRINGFIELD – The Senate took another vote on May 18 on a measure that would raise the legal smoking age to 21. The measure's sponsor, John Mulroe (D-Chicago), believes that the timing is right to take up the issue. After not receiving enough votes a week ago, the Tobacco 21 bill passed today.

"It's never the wrong time to do the right thing," Mulroe said on the floor, following derisive opposition." California, Hawaii and Massachusetts, along with

the city of Chicago, have already passed similar measures. There's no reason we shouldn't take this stand for Illinois youth."

The proposal was an initiative of the American Lung Association. Despite well-cited facts that cigarettes cause cancer and a painful, eventual death, myriad concerns were raised: among them, the fact that someone can enlist in the military at 18, the fact that there were not strong enough criminal penalties and that the legislation bordered on

making Illinois more of a "nanny state."

"Smoking kills, and if we can come together to stop kids from starting smoking, why would we not take that opportunity?" Mulroe asked. "This is a serious issue that needs further debate, but I won't stop fighting to protect the health and safety of young people in this state."



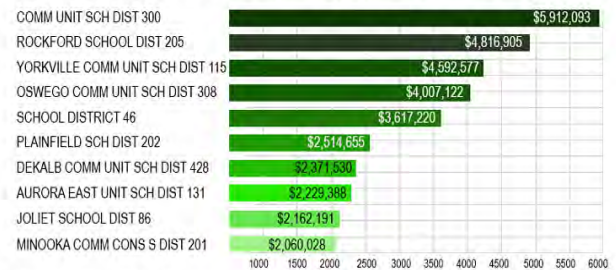


## TOP 10 LOSERS UNDER GOV. RAUNER'S ED FUNDING PROPOSAL



SOURCE: ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION FUNDING PROJECTIONS FOR GENERAL STATE AID

## TOP 10 WINNERS UNDER GOV. RAUNER'S ED FUNDING PROPOSAL



SOURCE: ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION FUNDING PROJECTIONS FOR GENERAL STATE AID

# Winners, losers predictable in governor's ed funding plan

How would individual school districts fare under Gov. Bruce Rauner's funding plan for education? The Illinois State Board of Education released its projected numbers today.

With ISBE's detailed breakdown published, every school district in Illinois now has a sense of how they would do under the governor's proposed education budget. Rauner's plan puts more money into the state's current education funding formula, which was enacted in 1997, without a plan to update that formula. Despite the increase in funding, many schools that have been making cuts in recent years due to limited state funding would be facing yet another cut.

Senator Andy Manar (D-Bunker Hill) is the sponsor of Senate Bill 231, a plan that would update the state's antiquated school funding formula and replace it with a modern formula that sends state money to schools based on student need. Under the new formula, the state would calculate how much

each school district needs based on the makeup of its student body.

In addition, no school would lose state funding in the first year, and budgeting provisions would help schools plan for four years.

"This information gives us the opportunity to thoroughly debate the merits of the governor's plan. Each school district deserves to know how it would fare under it," said Manar. "Unfortunately, what I'm seeing is that the additional money flowing into the formula would continue to be funneled away from schools with the greatest need."

"Putting more money into education is a great idea, but our flawed funding formula means that districts that lack resources and have been hit hard by cuts -- districts like Taylorville, East St. Louis, Harvey and Streator -- will be hit once again. In these four districts alone, there's over \$1.3 million in combined cuts. It's not fair to the students, teachers, parents or taxpayers. These numbers show why change is

needed."

State Senators Donne Trotter and Mattie Hunter, both of Chicago, said a Democratic-backed overhaul of Illinois' outdated school funding formula is a better approach.

"The numbers speak for themselves. Some of the most disenfranchised students across our state will lose because of our state's broken funding formula," said Trotter, the Illinois Senate Appropriations II chairman. "This is a thinly-veiled attempt to propose new cuts to poor families."

The current funding structure, unchanged since 1997, makes Illinois the second-most unbalanced school funding system in the nation.

"In some school districts, students have access to cutting-edge technology and iPads. In other districts, 30 students crowd around a shared, outdated text book," Hunter said. "The governor's plan fails to address the need for an overhaul of our current system."



## Senator Bertino-Tarrant: Strip Hastert of public pensions

PLAINFIELD— Illinois State Senator Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant (D-Shorewood) said Thursday that former U.S. House Speaker Dennis J. Hastert is a disgrace to teachers and lawmakers and should be stripped of all taxpayer-funded pensions from past jobs.

“I don’t want taxpayers’ dollars providing a retirement to this predator,” Bertino-Tarrant said. She sent a letter Thursday to the General Assembly Retirement System asking that it immediately take steps to suspend and revoke Hastert’s public pension benefits.

On Wednesday, Hastert was sentenced to 15 months in prison

for bank fraud stemming from efforts to cover up sex abuse dating back to his time as a teacher in Yorkville. Hastert later went on to serve in the Illinois General Assembly before being elected to Congress and rising to become the powerful U.S. House Speaker. He had qualified for pension benefits for his tenure as a teacher, state lawmaker and congressman.

Illinois’ Teachers’ Retirement System canceled Hastert’s pension on Wednesday. However, the General Assembly system has not. Media reports have put his state lawmaker pension at

roughly \$28,000 annually.

Bertino-Tarrant said taxpayers have no duty to provide retirement benefits to someone who betrayed them and victimized children.

“Knowing what we know now, he would have been fired and jailed decades ago and would have lost his teacher’s pension and never had the chance to be a lawmaker, let alone get a pension. We have a chance to set the record straight. We should do so immediately as part of the effort to restore the public’s trust,” Bertino-Tarrant said.





# Bush pushes to repeal taxes on feminine hygiene products

Over their lifetimes, women earn less but pay more than men do for the same products – and they need to buy sanitary products men just don't need to think about it.

That's why State Sen. Melinda Bush pushed to repeal the unfair luxury tax on tampons, menstrual cups and sanitary napkins that charges young women 6.25 percent on purchases, just as if these items were like shampoo or soap.

"For 20 years, these items were classified as unavoidable necessities for women until the full tax was reinstated in 2009," said Bush, D-Grayslake. "In a year that could very well end with the election of our first woman to the office of president of the United States, it's time for Illinois to join the nationwide conversation about the unfair 'pink taxes' women face."

The legislation would exempt tampons, pads and menstrual cups from the statewide 6.25 percent sales tax. A 1989 Illinois Supreme Court ruling already determined that the practice of levying the standard sales tax was unfair and determined that the tax should be reduced to one percent. In 2009, the administration decided to issue a rule change to return the tax to 6.25 percent in order to shore



up state revenue – a move Bush called unfair and arbitrary.

Bush was vocal in promoting the legislation and joining the worldwide conversation on addressing systemic economic discrimination against women. In April, she joined other speakers at the University of Chicago's Institute of Policy's "News & Views" speaking event to talk about her efforts to repeal the sales tax on feminine hygiene products like tampons.

At that event, Bush spoke about the legislative process involved in crafting the measure, why an unavoidable "luxury" tax

on a female biological process is unfair and how similar proposals are meeting with enthusiastic support in other states like California, Ohio, New York, Utah and Virginia.

The legislation passed the Illinois Senate with just one dissenting vote from State Sen. Kyle McCarter... whose wife called him soon afterward to convince him to change his vote.



# Top 16 new Illinois laws for 2016

Every year, the General Assembly passes hundreds of new laws that affect the lives of Illinois citizens and present new opportunities for safety, security and government transparency.

Many of the laws that went into effect in 2016 meant changes in how state government operates and interacts with citizens. Among them are laws to protect pets that were left out in extreme heat or cold, create a Silver Alert system to help locate missing senior citizens, and require all Illinois schools to have carbon monoxide detectors.

Others ensure a smooth transfer process for community college students moving on to their next institution of higher education, require high school students to take civics courses and declare pumpkin the state pie.

This snapshot reflects a larger list of new laws that changed Illinois in 2016 that you can find on our website.

Thank you for helping us share this important news.

**Misdemeanor charges for leaving pets out in extreme heat or cold. (SB 125)**

**Impoundment of animals if owner is arrested for cruelty. (SB 1735)**

**Enhanced penalties for pet abuse in the presence of children. (HB 3231)**

**Require shelters to scan lost pets for microchips within 24 hours. (HB 4029)**



**Requires Illinois to establish a Silver Alert system to help communities locate missing adults with Alzheimer's, dementia or other cognitive impairments. (SB 1846)**



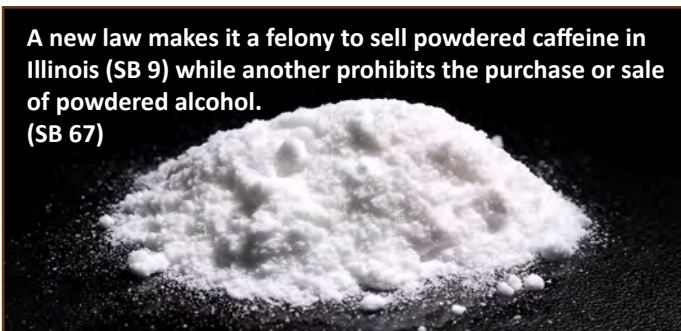
**Illinois grows more pumpkins than any other state, so it's only natural that pumpkin became the state's official pie on Jan. 1. (HB 208)**



**Illinois set standards for the use of cameras, storage of data and the release of video to media and the public. The law also largely prohibits police use of chokeholds and requires more training and accountability for law enforcement. (SB 1304)**



**A new law makes it a felony to sell powdered caffeine in Illinois (SB 9) while another prohibits the purchase or sale of powdered alcohol. (SB 67)**



**People convicted of a second DUI will be required to use a breath alcohol ignition interlock device and have a restricted driving permit for at least five years. (HB 3533)**







**A new Illinois law will fine non-electric car owners \$75 for parking at an electric car charging station. (HB 198)**

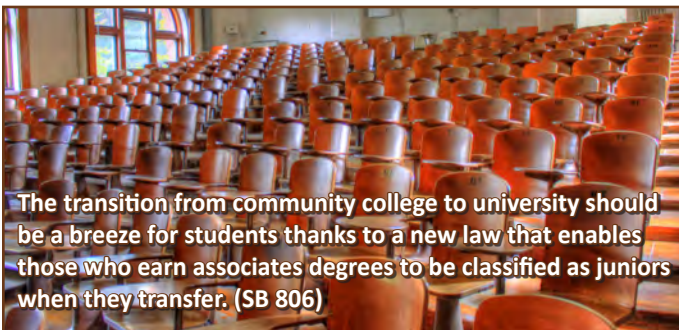


**Requires high school students to complete two years of social studies with at least one semester of civics. (HB 4025)**

**A carbon monoxide leak at a rural Illinois school in the fall of 2014 sent more than 180 students and staff to the hospital. A new law requires schools to have CO detectors. (HB 152)**

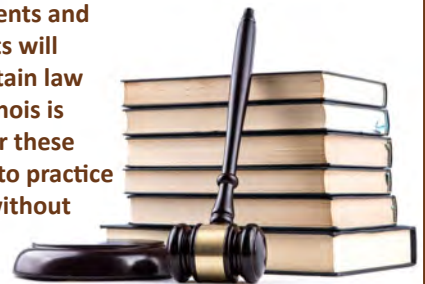


**Children will be safer in Illinois homes because of a new law that allows pharmacists to put a locking device on dangerous and highly addictive prescription medications. (HB 3219)**



**The transition from community college to university should be a breeze for students thanks to a new law that enables those who earn associates degrees to be classified as juniors when they transfer. (SB 806)**

**Undocumented residents and children of immigrants will now be eligible to obtain law licenses in Illinois. Illinois is the third state to offer these residents the chance to practice and uphold the law without worrying they are in violation of it. (SB 23)**



**Illinois banned the harmful and ineffective gay conversion therapy on minors by mental health professionals. The new law also prohibits referring to homosexuality as an illness when advertising so-called conversion therapy service. (HB 217)**



**Terminally ill patients will have the right to try experimental treatments once they've considered all other FDA-approved treatments. (HB 1335)**

**Children and intellectually disabled adults who are victims of sexual abuse will be able to have a service dog at their side for comfort and companionship while testifying in court. (SB 1389)**



**Traveling new mothers will have access to special rooms where they can nurse and pump in private in Illinois' major airports. The new law requires Chicago's O'Hare and Midway airports, as well as all new and renovated airports, to have lactation rooms by 2017. (SB 344)**



# Illinois Senate welcomes President Obama back to Springfield

It was a day for old friends and a timely reminder on the value of civility and compromise when President Barack Obama came to the Capitol to speak to the General Assembly on February 10. He called for raising the tone of political culture at the state and national levels for much-needed give and take on policy and shared memories of his time here and his years as president. Here are some of our caucus members' reactions to the historic day:

Senate President John J. Cullerton: "Twice this man has rallied the country to dare us to see a better future and invigorated the American spirit. I have had the honor of a front-row seat to witness my friend's personal and professional growth from a colleague here in the Illinois Senate to leader on the world stage.

I've watched a consistency of character guide him in his challenge to improve the lives of the people he represented first in Chicago, then this state and ultimately across our country. Along the way, he has challenged each and every one of us to be the solution, to rise above rhetoric, refuse to be so easily divided and recognize avenues for agreement even among those who disagree.

As this chapter in his uniquely American story begins to draw to a close, I am left inspired by a



message I first heard from a young community organizer seeking a seat in the Illinois Senate: that if we are to have a better country, we must never stop believing in a better country."

Sen. Don Harmon (D-Oak Park): "President Obama delivered a magnificent speech to the Illinois General Assembly and offered a timely call for a better politics. It was simultaneously a reminder of the nobility of public service and a warning about the fragility of our democracy if we don't work every day to protect it.

"I was thrilled that the president made voter participation a key ingredient in his recipe for a better America. I think he put forth a plan for what could be a real turning point for the American body politic. I look forward to being part of this important conversation."

Senate Assistant Majority Leader Kimberly A. Lightford (D-Maywood): "More than the words spoken, sometimes a tone that strikes the right chord can deliver the strongest message. Beyond the president's message of principled compromise, which I believe we all gravely needed to hear, his hopeful, yet defiant tone is what I take away most from the speech today.

"To move past the gridlock, we have to defy the pervasive narrative that we cannot work together or that political interests are outweighing the interests of the people. Our leaders need to come together with a fresh outlook and a grounded understanding of the consequences of their motivations and actions. Then and only then, will we move forward in a democracy for the people, by the people."





# SENATE IN REVIEW

YOUR  
ACCOMPLISHMENTS









# John J. Cullerton

## Illinois Senate President | 6<sup>th</sup> Senate District



Calling Illinois' worst-in-the-nation school funding formula the "defining crisis of our time," the Illinois Senate President

challenged lawmakers and leaders to join efforts this session in overhauling the state's system for funding public education.

"Our students, parents, teachers and taxpayers are tired of the bickering, tired of the impasse," Cullerton said during a call-to-action City Club speech in January that laid out his top priority for the spring session's agenda at the Capitol. "They're looking for leaders with the courage to step beyond the status quo and do what's right. Today I'm asking my colleagues to take that step."

And step they did.

In a bipartisan vote praised by education advocates and editorial boards, the Illinois Senate approved dramatic changes to the classroom funding formula. The reform plan recognizes the challenges students and communities face and steers additional resources to help them overcome those hurdles.

It's a dramatic departure from the current system that tends to punish poor communities and students and those with additional educational needs. The result is the widest gap in educational resources

in the nation and a funding formula that is widely recognized as flawed.

Public school funding is just the latest example of how the Senate President has used his tenure atop the Senate to try to force overdue policy changes. In recent years, Illinois Senate Democrats led efforts to abolish the state's embarrassingly flawed death penalty system, enact marriage equality, require diversity in legislative redistricting and recognize the economic role and rights of immigrants.

Faced with slash-and-burn budgeting tactics from Republicans, the Senate President led efforts to remind everyone of the human lives behind our finances and the human toll that unfair cuts have on the less fortunate.

The Senate President remains at the forefront of efforts to craft pension reform legislation that

might save taxpayers billions of dollars over the coming years and withstand a constitutional challenge. Recent Illinois Supreme Court rulings continue to reinforce his interpretation of the retirement security provisions in the Illinois Constitution as competing proposals have all been ruled unconstitutional.

In addition, the Senate President continues to be an outspoken champion of the state, pointing out the natural and economic riches we have in the face of naysayers too often motivated by politics and profit. Appearing before civic groups, editorial boards and student classrooms, Senate President Cullerton calls for an end to the cynicism and calls on the state's leaders to work together to solve problems rather than waste time and energy tearing their own state down.





# James Clayborne

## Majority Leader | Assignments chair | 57<sup>th</sup> Senate District



Economic revitalization is needed in the Metro East, and State Senator James Clayborne remains dedicated to

improving the region's economic standing. One of the most important features of economic and urban development is encouraging locally owned small businesses.

Clayborne passed legislation helping ensure fair minority employment by requiring companies competing for state contracts to report their standards for minority hiring. He also promoted the expansion of minority investment managers for state retirement benefits.

He was also aware of continuing calls from the Metro East and throughout the state for more opportunities to consolidate and streamline the excessive number of government units in Illinois. Clayborne knows that with nearly 7,000 units of government in Illinois – more even than higher population states like California and Texas – taxpayers are maintaining a lot of small units of government whose duties might be better accomplished after being consolidated.

Recognizing there is no

procedure that allows the dissolution of one type of government unit – a local water authority – Clayborne focused on legislation allowing 500 electors residing within the area of a water authority to petition the circuit court to dissolve the water authority by referendum.

Away from the Capitol, Clayborne continued his commitment to making sure local students gain firsthand perspective of the locations and events that led to the Civil Rights Act. In an average public school education, minority students many times will read of the life and times of the Founding Fathers without reading about the Freedom Riders, or study the battles of the Second World War without reading about its effect on integration within the U.S. military.

To give all students a true appreciation of the depth of their cultural history, Clayborne continued sponsoring trips this spring for local high school students, helping them visit a wide variety of colleges and historic sites from the Civil Rights Movement. These trips give students a broader college search experience. Likewise, by visiting the iconic locations where the Civil Rights Movement took hold, students gain a greater perspective and appreciation for the gravity of past generations' sacrifices.

Along with his college tour, Clayborne continued his mentoring program for young men. He worked to show students in lower-income parts of the region the opportunities that exist for academic and professional success.







# Don Harmon

**President Pro Tempore | Executive chair | 39<sup>th</sup> Senate District**



It's not every day that the president of the United States offers an enthusiastic public affirmation of a state senator's work,

but it happened to Senator Don Harmon this year.

During a historic speech before the Illinois Legislature in February, President Barack Obama – a former Democratic Illinois state senator – recognized Harmon for his efforts to expand voting access in Illinois.

"Thanks to the good work of my dear friend, Senator Don Harmon, and many of you, there's a new law going into effect this year that will allow Illinoisans to register and vote at the polls on Election Day," Obama said. "It expands early voting – something that makes it a lot easier for working folks and busy parents to go vote."

Harmon was lead sponsor of legislation that expanded same-day voter registration in Illinois. It was one of his latest efforts to modernize the voting system in Illinois and make it easier for people to participate in elections. He also is a sponsor of legislation to bring automatic voter registration to Illinois.

Harmon, president pro tempore of the Illinois Senate, continues to champion solutions to some of the most important issues facing Illinois and his district, which includes Oak Park, Addison, Rosemont and

Chicago's Austin neighborhood.

In April he joined former Arizona Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, who survived a 2011 assassination attempt, to call for more oversight of gun dealers. He put forth a proposal that would require background checks of gun dealer employees and allow authorities to audit gun inventories – all in an effort to curb violent crime with illegally purchased guns.

Harmon also continues to back efforts that would promote renewable energy, clean jobs and protecting wildlife and the environment. His clean jobs proposal would require Illinois to get 35 percent of its electricity from renewable sources, such as wind and solar power, within 15 years. It also seeks to reduce overall energy use in Illinois by 20 percent by incentivizing purchases of energy-efficient appliances and weatherization of buildings.

The initiative would create

thousands of good-paying jobs in construction, sales and real estate.

In addition, Harmon called for more protection of Illinois' recovering bobcat population and sponsored legislation that would prohibit trapping of the animals and selling their pelts.

He continues to champion his long-held support of fair taxes for Illinoisans, fair labor negotiations and funding for higher education and human services.

He sponsored a measure to make binding arbitration an option in labor negotiations between the governor and unions representing state employees. And he sponsored legislation to enable most Illinois public schools to offer students breakfast after the bell – or second-chance breakfast – in an effort to curb hunger and encourage learning.





# Kimberly A. Lightford

## Assistant Majority Leader | 4<sup>th</sup> Senate District



Mental health has long been an issue throughout our state and country. Recent studies show that 14 to 20 percent of all school-age children in the U.S. and 13 percent of preschoolers have an emotional or behavioral disorder. Unfortunately, the stigma surrounding mental health has deterred a much needed search for solutions.

That stigma may soon be buried thanks to legislation spearheaded by Assistant Majority Leader Kimberly A. Lightford that adds social and emotional screenings to school health examinations. The initiative is aimed at identifying potential mental health problems in school-age children, removing the stigma of mental illness and reducing teen suicide.

Understanding the needs of different students, Senator Lightford sponsored a proposal that allows 4-year Chicago universities to host a charter school devoted exclusively to re-enrolled high school dropouts.

Children learn in different ways, especially when facing adverse situations. Therefore, it's important to provide access to schools working to structure a more realistic educational

environment for dropouts given their limited skills, time out of school and need for remediation.

Leader Lightford is committed to helping single parents provide for their children. Right now, there exists an economic disincentive to pay child support. By requiring a non-custodial parent to pay such a large amount of child support, while the receiving family only receives a marginal benefit, the receiving family loses out on other assistance that they desperately need.

Families collecting child support may soon be able to rely on more consistent and helpful payments. The measure would allow families collecting child support for one child to receive the first \$100 in a month and families with two children to receive the first \$200 in a month

without that money determining the amount of a family's temporary assistance grant.

As Chairman of the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus (ILBC), Senator Lightford continues to make strides in improving the lives of African Americans and all people throughout our state. This year, the ILBC hosted its 2nd Annual Civic Engagement Day. Students from across the state were brought to Springfield to learn more about the legislative process and how to take part in government for themselves.

Senator Lightford is a vigorous fighter for education, families and criminal justice. Her ability to negotiate solutions for those and many other issues facing our state resonates through impactful legislation.

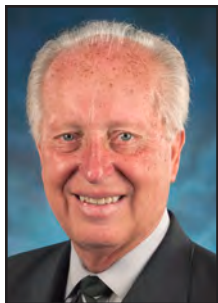






# Terry Link

## Assistant Majority Leader | 30<sup>th</sup> Senate District



Three years ago, students at suburban Stevenson High School led a statewide push to give 17 year olds the ability to register and vote in primary elections if they would turn 18 in time for the fall general election.

Those students turned to Senator Terry Link for help making their idea a state law. He delivered for them and the governor signed their proposal into law at their school.

Now, Senator Link and Stevenson students have teamed up again in an effort to continue encouraging young people to get involved in the political process and help shape their futures. This year they are building on the success of the 2013 law and expanding the ability of 17 year olds to register people to vote and be able to sign and help circulate petitions for people trying to get on the ballot.

The students have found a sympathetic ear with Senator Link, who recalls how his 18th birthday fell two days after a primary and he was unable to participate. Their voting effort is just one of several ways Senator Link has worked to represent the people and communities of Lake County at the Capitol this year.

He's been an outspoken critic of the governor's cuts to higher education. After the governor eliminated state support for the College of Lake County along with all other community colleges and public universities, Link supported plans to restore funding for the schools along with the state financial support promised to needy students.

In Springfield, Link has also led the fight for veterans' families. Many veterans are eligible for a property tax exemption due to their service for our country. Link sponsored legislation to ensure the spouses of veterans aren't hit with property tax increases when their spouse dies. His proposal extends the exemption to surviving spouses of eligible veterans.

Link is also working with State Treasurer Michael Frerichs to enhance a state program that's

proven successful at reuniting Illinois residents with lost or forgotten financial resources. Link's proposal gets unclaimed property ranging from stocks and CDs to safe deposit boxes and valuables to Frerichs' office two years sooner. At the Treasurer's Office, it goes into the I-Cash program, a massive, searchable database, making it far easier to get the resources back in the hands of the people they belong to.





# Antonio Munoz

Assistant Majority Leader | Executive Appointments chair | *1<sup>st</sup> Senate District*



When former U.S. Marine Jauwan Hall transferred to the University of Illinois at Chicago, he was stunned

to learn that military courses he completed didn't count toward his degree. There was no mechanism in place to designate which military courses were equivalent to courses at UIC.

University officials were unable to find a way to implement a university-wide policy. Hall was forced to repeat coursework.

Senator Antonio "Tony" Munoz, an army veteran, doesn't believe veterans should be shortchanged on the education they received while serving their country. That's why he sponsored and advanced legislation to make sure students get credit for military courses at Illinois schools.

It was one of several initiatives helping veterans that Munoz worked on this past session at the Capitol.

Understanding that veterans' issues stem further than just our state, Senator Munoz sponsored a resolution supporting federal legislation that would stop the deportation of people who served in the Armed Forces. Munoz believes people who put their lives on the line for our country

deserve better treatment and those who haven't committed serious crimes should be brought back to the United States for rehabilitation.

Munoz also supported legislation what would require health care professionals to include a question regarding military service history on intake forms to tailor treatment options to provide funds for the construction of a Chicago Veteran's Home and to expand tax breaks for veterans.

In addition to his ongoing advocacy for veterans, Munoz also worked with the Chicago Police Department to move its criminal offender registration site.

Currently, state law requires any person ordered to register as an arsonist, sex offender or violent offender against youth to do so at the Public Safety

Headquarters, a location that poses security concerns for the police department due to its proximity to a school and public library.

Leader Munoz's legislation would give the superintendent of the department the ability to choose a new fixed location to conduct registrations.

Munoz is dedicated to improving the lives of the people in his communities and throughout the state. His unique experiences give him the tools to tackle issues from a personal perspective and understanding.







# John Sullivan

## Assistant Majority Leader | 47<sup>th</sup> Senate District



Throughout the last 14 years, State Senator John Sullivan has represented the agriculture community as the only farmer

in the state Senate. His firsthand knowledge of farming made him a strong voice for Illinois farmers as the Chairman for the Senate's Agriculture Committee.

During his tenure in the Illinois Senate, he has been an advocate for Second Amendment rights for Illinois residents. Taking his common-sense legislation approach, Sullivan passed legislation to update FOID and concealed carry acts. The new law stemmed from Brent Nicholson, a Quincy native from Sullivan's district. Due to Nicholson's mild intellectual disability, he was unable to apply for a concealed carry license. Since learning of Nicholson's difficulty, Sullivan has worked hard to champion this legislation and protect the Second Amendment rights of people like him.

Sullivan has been a strong supporter of Western Illinois University in Macomb since his work as the lead negotiator of the 2009 capital bill that appropriated \$60 million to build the WIU's Performing Arts Center. Throughout the budget impasse,

Sullivan has been a passionate voice leading the charge for funding for need-based student financial aid and higher education in Illinois.

Sullivan pushed a plan to encourage businesses to hire unemployed veterans. Employers now receive a 20 percent tax credit when they hire an unemployed veteran who has served on active duty since September 11, 2001. This bipartisan measure is just one example of Sullivan's work for Illinois veterans. He believes when Illinois businesses hire veterans, everybody wins because the business community gains proven leaders, neighborhoods and communities prosper as jobs are created and, most importantly, our returning veterans transition successfully to civilian life.

Over the years, Sullivan has made sure he and his office staff have been available to the residents of the 47th district, the largest Senate district in Illinois. Each year, Sullivan has hosted town hall meetings and open office hours in every community in the district. There is no problem too small or too big for his offices to tackle.





# Donne Trotter

**Assistant Majority Leader | Appropriations II chair | 17<sup>th</sup> Senate District**



With thousands of Illinois college students lost in limbo and communities fearing for the future of their public

universities, Senator Donne Trotter stepped forward this past session to offer solutions and stability in the midst of the lingering budget impasse.

The veteran Senate budget negotiator once again emerged as a go-to voice of reason, helping lead approval of several proposals that reaffirmed Senate Democrats' commitment to the people of Illinois.

Trotter hand-delivered to the governor's office legislation to protect the Monetary Award Program, the state's most popular financial aid program for college students. He was flanked by dozens of college students who came to the Capitol to protest the governor's cuts to the program.

Trotter similarly spoke out against higher education budget cuts that threatened to close the doors at his own alma mater, Chicago State University. With the school just days away from shutting down, Trotter led the Illinois Senate in passing a veto-proof rescue plan that temporarily stabilized higher education and scholarship funding.

"We should keep our economic engine strong by restoring the people's trust in our education system and our state," Trotter said.

Leader Trotter also worked to restore residents' trust in their public safety and health by passing legislation addressing the concerns of lead poisoning.

An alarming number of old apartments across the state are filled with lead-based paint and building materials. Buildings built before 1978 have an exponentially higher chance of containing these harmful materials.

Trotter proposed legislation, Senate Bill 2300, to prevent the leasing of properties with known high levels of lead. The practice is legal under current law.

In addition, the son of civil rights activists worked to restore peoples' trust in their community

by addressing national discourse on race relations. Trotter drafted Senate Resolution 6590 to designate June 17 as a day of peace, remembrance and unity to pay respects to the families and victims of the Emanuel AME Church massacre in South Carolina.

Trotter remains one of the leading voices on the state's budgeting process. As Appropriations II chairman, he leads the state discourse on protecting funding for critical services while finding means to keep the state running.







# Ira I. Silverstein

## Majority Caucus chair | 8<sup>th</sup> Senate District



Vulnerable Illinoisans deserve a champion to protect their rights and safety. Senator Ira Silverstein was that

champion this year for homeless young people, college students and Illinois motorists.

Whether on their own or with their families, homeless teens often lack the resources needed to regularly attend school and earn their diplomas. They also face a financial barrier if they wish to take high school equivalency exams in lieu of those diplomas, because of the associated fees.

Senator Silverstein passed a bill to remove that barrier and eliminate fees for homeless young people to take GED exams. Waiving fees from \$120 to \$150 gives them a boost to further their education and qualify for better paying jobs. They can escape homelessness and contribute to a better economy for our state now.

Higher education institutions gained more options to protect students from sexual violence on campus with Sen. Silverstein's Senate Bill 2839. It amends the Preventing Sexual Violence in Higher Education Act to specify an institution may

include suspension, expulsion or removal of the sex offender after complaint resolution procedures. The Act puts in place numerous policies and procedures to protect survivors, adjudicate allegations and start conversations on campus about sexual violence.

"Ice missiles" sound like weapons in a James Bond film, but they are real, deadly and the target of legislation Sen. Silverstein proposed this year to prevent them and penalize those who cause them.

An ice missile is a large chunk of ice or snow that flies off a large truck on the highway. Senate Bill 634 would have required a person operating a vehicle weighing more than 8,000 pounds to remove ice and snow that poses a safety threat to other vehicles and drivers. Nearly 100 deaths

and thousands of accidents happen each year as a result. The legislation met with strong opposition from the Illinois Trucking Association, Midwest Truckers, National Waste and Recycling Association and Illinois Coal Association.

A survivor of such an accident in 2010 testified before the Transportation Committee. He lost vision in his left eye after three surgeries to rebuild his face. In spite of the statistics on the dangers ice missiles present to motorists, the Senate Transportation Committee did not approve the proposal. Other states' lawmakers have addressed this dangerous situation and required motor carriers to prevent it whenever possible.





# William Haine

**Majority Caucus Whip | Insurance chair | 56<sup>th</sup> Senate District**



When Senator Bill Haine learned that citizens in his district were being charged exceedingly high impound fees for towed

vehicles – sometimes as much as \$500 – he was compelled to step in.

Recognizing that unforeseeable situations sometimes lead to vehicles being towed, Haine filed legislation to curb predatory impound practices and establish consumer protections for people who fall victim to excessive towing fees in the Metro East.

Haine is a strong voice in Springfield on behalf of the communities he represents in the 56th Senate District, which includes all or part of Madison, Jersey and St. Clair counties and the cities of Alton, Edwardsville, Collinsville, Granite City and Wood River.

He tirelessly has worked to protect programs and services for senior citizens, students, colleges and universities and middle-class families.

As Southern Illinois University and its Edwardsville campus grappled with an uncertain future because of the state budget stalemate, Haine voted to provide state money to SIU – a key employer in his district – so that it could continue to thrive and attract students from all over the Midwest

and the nation.

He also voted to fund the state's Monetary Award Program, which offers tuition assistance to students who otherwise would not be able to afford college.

Haine is a champion for senior citizens and programs that help them. He voted to fund human service agencies, including Senior Services Plus in Alton, as they struggled to continue providing services when resources dwindled because of state budget stalemate. Senior Services Plus assists more than 30,000 senior citizens in southern Illinois and the Metro East. Initiatives like its Meals-on-Wheels program faced cuts because of the stalemate.

His senior fair in April enabled constituents to learn about scams targeting senior citizens, discover savings in their utility bills, find resources for veterans and more.

Haine supports efforts to maintain and expand infrastructure in Illinois. Improving highways and bridges is an important economic driver that puts people to work and makes all areas of the state easier to access. He shepherded a constitutional amendment through the Senate that would prohibit governors from raiding the state's road fund for purposes other than transportation projects by putting the money in a "lock box."

Serving a district that borders the Mississippi River, Haine has pushed for increased recovery aid for communities affected by flooding and other natural disasters. He understands the severe effects flooding can have on communities – from damage to homes and businesses to taxing the limited resources of local first responders.

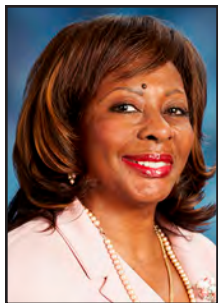






# Mattie Hunter

Majority Caucus Whip | Energy & Public Utilities chair | 3<sup>rd</sup> Senate District



Ronnesha Whitfield was just a few weeks away from graduating from Ombudsman High School

late last year when she decided to attend a college fair hosted by Illinois State Senator Mattie Hunter.

Whitfield's academic career had a few detours along the way. Although she was back on track, she was concerned that her test scores might limit her options. Instead, she learned about possible scholarships to help her continue her journey toward an information technology degree.

"I didn't expect for it to be this awesome and amazing to get information from the colleges," said Whitfield.

It was just one of the many ways Senator Hunter is working to help the lives of people in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Senate District and across Illinois.

In addition to the college fair, Hunter hosts career fairs in an effort to combat the soaring unemployment plaguing Chicago's minority youth. A staggering 90 percent of African-American and 79 percent of Hispanic youth find themselves unemployed. Her events provide students and young adults with easy access to military and job recruiters.

Hunter also fought to keep the state's public universities and community colleges open and maintain resources for student financial aid. She helped pass a financial rescue plan that kept public universities standing.

The Senator continued her advocacy on behalf of children raised under the state's care. She won approval of the Foster Youth Summer Internship Program (Senate Bill 1255), which will create a pipeline to career opportunities for former wards of the state.

Leader Hunter continued to be an outspoken advocate for youth programs across the city as an alternative to tragic violence. She spoke to youth at After School Matters, an after school program, and participated in a balloon release with other families victimized by violence in order to

raise awareness.

She stood alongside religious and community leaders, concerned residents and youth in calling for improved relations between the Chicago Police Department and the public. At the Capitol, she spearheaded policies to address the mounting distrust in law enforcement by urging police departments to create crisis intervention training. She also supported sweeping criminal justice reforms backed by the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus.

Leader Hunter also protected rights and safety for Muslims in Illinois by bringing awareness to anti-religious hate crimes plaguing the state. She joined community leaders to mark April 19 as Illinois Muslim Action Day, a day to urge peace and equality.





# Iris Y. Martinez

Majority Caucus Whip | Licensed Activities & Pensions chair | 20<sup>th</sup> Senate District



When Majority Caucus Whip Iris Y. Martinez learned that part of the All Kids health insurance program for more than 40,000 low-income children was about to expire, she responded by passing legislation to keep it in place.

To Martinez, providing health insurance to children in Illinois is not only the morally right thing to do, but it's also good public policy. The last thing she wanted is for children to lose their health insurance, which could lead to them developing long-term health problems and ultimately costing the state more.

Protecting health insurance for the most vulnerable is just one example of the senator's passion for helping others.

Martinez also advanced legislation out of the Senate that gives undocumented students a fair shot at affording college.

Known as the Student Access Bill, Martinez's plan would level the playing field for undocumented students by allowing them to compete for state-based financial aid at Illinois' four-year public universities. If this proposal becomes law, it is estimated that 1,500 students would receive

new scholarship opportunities.

Knowing that the majority of Latinos have type O blood, which is in high demand because it can be transfused to patients with other blood types, the senator continued working with the Illinois Coalition of Blood Centers to encourage more Latinos to become blood donors.

Martinez, the first Latina ever elected to the Illinois Senate, also passed legislation improving the State Seal of Bilingualism, a recognition given to high school students demonstrating proficiency in English and at least one other language. She got legislative approval for a measure that will help students meet foreign language requirements at universities if the students obtain the state bilingual seal.

After concerns were brought forward that the Rauner

administration wanted to eliminate health care benefits for home child care workers, Martinez passed legislation preventing the administration from stripping the employees of their insurance. The measure also updated child care requirements for child care providers to ensure Illinois is compliant with new federal guidelines.

Senator Martinez was among the leaders to speak out about the growing unrest between minority communities and the Chicago Police Department. She called for a change in the culture of the department in response to a report from the Taskforce on Police Accountability that brought to light new concerns. Martinez said the department needs to build trust with minority communities.







# Scott Bennett

## *52<sup>nd</sup> Senate District*



Almost a year into a budget stalemate, as social service providers and state schools go without crucial funding,

Senator Scott Bennett is sharing in the sacrifice, refusing to accept a paycheck until the impasse ends.

For Bennett, going without pay is a reminder of the essential services, programs and institutions in the 52nd Senate District that rely on the state. Higher education is a driving economic engine in the region that includes the state's flagship school, the University of Illinois, along with Parkland and Danville Area community colleges.

After Gov. Bruce Rauner eliminated funding for those schools last year, Bennett fought to find funding and worked to reassure students and employees. Recognizing the perilous effects the collapse of colleges and universities would have, he supported four different versions of higher education funding to try to restore stability to the local economy.

When a deal was struck to initially provide 30 percent of the higher education budget, and then later, 60 percent, Bennett wasn't satisfied and introduced legislation to secure the remaining funds for the area institutions, which have

suffered significant state cuts over the past decade.

And when he wasn't fighting to protect higher education, Bennett utilized his background as a prosecutor to advance needed protections, specifically for women and children.

Using his experience in the Champaign County State's Attorney Office, Bennett worked with the Attorney General Lisa Madigan and various stakeholders to pass legislation to encourage more sexual assault survivors to come forward and increase the successful prosecution of sexual assault crimes in Illinois.

Bennett's initiative will improve the response of law enforcement, including 911 operators, first responders and investigators, to sexual assault survivors through evidence-based, trauma-informed and victim-centered policies,

procedures, training and practices. The measure also enhances procedures for the transmission of evidence from hospital emergency personnel to law enforcement.

The attorney general and Bennett continue to work to eliminate existing deadlines on prosecuting alleged child sex offenders.

Bennett is also working to resolve lingering bureaucratic problems for those still putting their lives back together from the 2013 Gifford tornado. Several homeowners whose homes were destroyed rebuilt, but if the new home was larger than the one destroyed, the homeowner was denied a Nature Disaster Homestead Exemption. He won Senate approval of legislation to restore homeowners' eligibility for the tax break after such natural disasters.





# Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant

## *49<sup>th</sup> Senate District*



State Senator Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant is dedicated to delivering results for the taxpayers.

After former U.S. Speaker Dennis Hastert received a prison sentence for bank fraud stemming from efforts to cover up sex abuse when he was a teacher, Bertino-Tarrant was the first to demand the disgraced lawmaker be stripped of all of his taxpayer-funded pensions.

The Teachers' Retirement System was first to respond, immediately canceling Hastert's pension. Bertino-Tarrant is focused on getting the Illinois General Assembly Retirement System to do the same. In addition to calling on system officials to take action, she's requested the Illinois Attorney General step in to end Hastert's \$28,000 annual pension check.

To Bertino-Tarrant, this issue was straightforward. The taxpayers had no duty to provide retirement benefits to a disgraced lawmaker and predator who betrayed them and victimized children.

This is just one example of the senator's willingness to speak out and take action to find commonsense solutions.

Bertino-Tarrant succeeded in passing legislation that would

correct a loophole in the federal Family and Medical Leave Act.

A parent whose child has a serious medical condition can receive time off from work under that law. However, that same parent would not be allowed to take time off for the death of a child.

Recognizing that the federal law doesn't make sense, Bertino-Tarrant won Senate approval of landmark legislation that would guarantee time off for employees who suffer the loss of a child. Her proposal would expand coverage by ensuring that a worker whose child dies can be provided with two weeks of unpaid bereavement leave without risk of losing the job.

If the senator's plan becomes law, Illinois would become a leader by joining Oregon as the only states to offer this to workers.

Bertino-Tarrant also developed a creative way to turn around drug money seized by police and have it help solve the problem. The proposal she guided to Senate approval would allow money taken from drug-related crimes to be used to fund substance abuse treatment initiatives.

Knowing the realities of the increasingly competitive work environment, Bertino-Tarrant sponsored legislation designed to continue and improve programs that encourage businesses to assist workers in obtaining college degrees.

Her proposal extends a higher education tax credit for five years and doubles to \$1,000 the maximum tax credit provided to employers that match an employee's contribution to tuition savings accounts.







# Daniel Biss

## Human Services chair | 9<sup>th</sup> Senate District



When a newspaper investigation showed Illinois was suing inmates and parolees for the cost of their incarceration,

Senator Daniel Biss recognized the pitfalls of the practice and saw it as an opportunity for change.

Calling it a question of morality and a recipe for recidivism, Biss introduced legislation that would prohibit the Illinois Department of Corrections from suing inmates to recoup the cost of their room and board while in prison – a lawful practice that rarely had occurred since 1982 but recently had become more common in Illinois.

Biss reasoned that suing inmates and parolees for the modest resources they may have come into while serving their time all but guarantees them a life of poverty, crime or government assistance in order to survive. It does nothing to further the principle of second chances.

The legislation was another example of the Evanston senator's tireless efforts to advance issues of fairness and equality in Illinois, as well as legislation to protect people's privacy.

For example, Biss advanced a plan this spring to regulate police use of cell tower simulators – commonly known as “stingrays”

– for surveillance, because of the threat to people's privacy and personal information.

The simulators act as cell phone towers and trick phones in a particular area into thinking they are connecting to a phone tower operated by a service provider. Police can use the stingrays to determine someone's location, the serial numbers of phones in the area and more.

But as police collect data on targeted individuals, they also can collect data on dozens or hundreds of innocent people. Biss's proposal would offer police better guidance on using the stingrays to solve crimes without violating people's right to privacy.

In addition, Biss, chairman of the Senate's Human Services Committee, established himself as a thoughtful, rational voice on the state budget stalemate and its

consequences on human service providers, higher education and the economy. Autopilot, he said, is no way for Illinois to run state government.

A panel discussion on the budget stalemate that Biss hosted in his district in April drew more than 200 residents. The discussion featured three speakers who offered perspectives on how the budget stalemate affected various state services.

In addition, Biss was invited to appear on a variety of TV and radio news programs to discuss possible solutions to the stalemate. He also was featured in a Detroit Public TV documentary about the retirement savings crisis in the United States – an issue he has long championed – and on a Univision Chicago news report on gay conversion therapy for young people – also a matter of great concern to him.





# Melinda Bush

## *31<sup>st</sup> Senate District*



Women still make just \$0.79 on the dollar compared to men, and many of the products designed for them are pricier. To fight

for reforms to policies that affect the finances of young women, Senator Melinda Bush pushed for legislation that would revoke the tax on tampons and other feminine sanitary items this year.

So-called “pink taxes” fall on women, and in the case of the 6.25 percent sales tax on tampons, menstrual cups and sanitary napkins, on young women in particular. Bush’s legislation makes such items tax-exempt, in keeping with several other states across the country that have joined in the important conversation regarding the bigger debate of how our tax structure unfairly burdens women.

Bush’s approach to common sense governance has been a major part of her career in public service since as early as her efforts to reform the Lake County and Forest Preserve boards during her time on the Lake County Board.

Continuing that effort in Springfield this year, she introduced legislation that would create a mechanism by which township government in

Illinois could be consolidated. Township boards could combine or dissolve and hand off duties to surrounding townships.

In contrast to other plans that advocate a one-size-fits-all approach and allow outsiders to initiate the process, Bush’s plan would ensure that control over how that process plays out remains with local people and would be affirmed by local voters. With nearly 7,000 government bodies in Illinois – far more than even more populous states like Texas or California – Bush argues that it’s time to seriously consider real consolidation efforts.

Bush also continued her efforts to be a strong advocate for the environment in 2016.

She sponsored legislation that would create the first new license plate designation under the new universal specialty plate system.

The monarch butterfly specialty plate would raise revenue for an innovative new approach to preserving this species: A program that seeds milkweed plants along the unused median strips of Illinois highways. The plants provide our state insect – whose population has plunged 90 percent in the past 20 years – with food, natural cover and a place to lay eggs.

Having led efforts to increase the availability of lifesaving drug overdose antidotes, Senator Bush continues her push to reform drug policy this year. For instance, she sponsored legislation that would ensure a drug court can’t deprive defendants of addiction medication prescribed by a licensed physician.







# Jacqueline Y. Collins

## Financial Institutions chair | 16<sup>th</sup> Senate District



While remaining one of the Senate's most stalwart critics of the Rauner administration's hostage-taking budget

strategy and one of its staunchest advocates for the most vulnerable, Senator Jacqueline Y. Collins continued advancing legislation that combats racial and socioeconomic inequality.

Collins, who has chaired the Senate Financial Institutions Committee since 2005, sponsored several pieces of legislation this year that protect consumers as they utilize financial services. Chief among them was the renewal of a state law that allows Illinois consumers who are underwater on their mortgages to take advantage of the Making Home Affordable program and a proposed ban on credit-based auto insurance pricing, a practice that disadvantages minority and low-income drivers.

She also remained a leader in the fight for justice for victims of excessive police force. Following the release last fall of a video of the final moments of Laquan McDonald, Collins called for the appointment of a special prosecutor to handle the case against the officer who shot the black teen repeatedly. Collins

co-sponsored numerous criminal justice reform proposals and introduced legislation making it easier for members of the public to file complaints against police. Measures she has sponsored would remove barriers to parolee participation in community service and mentoring programs, give park districts discretion to hire ex-offenders, cap exorbitant prisoner phone call costs and allow a person wrongfully arrested or convicted to have his or her record expunged – even if the individual has been convicted of a different crime in the past.

One of Collins' refrains is that a budget is a moral document, and she has done much to focus attention on the effect of budget cuts and the budget impasse on her constituents and other vulnerable Illinoisans – from low-income college students forced

to stop attending class due to unfunded MAP grants, to senior citizens choosing between eating and keeping the heat on. And she has advocated for legislation that improves quality of life for Illinois residents in the meantime. Her measure making human trafficking and torture victims eligible for government assistance passed the Senate in April, and legislation renewing the "Red Ribbon Cash" lottery ticket, which benefits organizations that provide HIV/AIDS treatment and education, is giving hope to a medically fragile population shortchanged by the budget crisis. Collins has also championed workers this session, sponsoring higher pay for in-home aides and the flexibility to use paid sick leave to care for a relative.





# Tom Cullerton

## *23<sup>rd</sup> Senate District*



Senator Tom Cullerton has a track record of advancing best practices in government efficiency across the state. Building

on the success he had in DuPage County, he advanced a measure to spread government consolidation throughout the state by allowing voters to approve the consolidation of non-elected boards.

This bipartisan measure, supported by the Illinois Chamber, Illinois Policy Institute and Illinois Municipal League, will save valuable taxpayer dollars and streamline services for Illinois residents.

To increase government transparency, Cullerton advanced his initiative to regulate all travel, meal and lodging expenses for public-sector officers and employees. His initiative will create the Local Government Travel Expense Control Act which will require local government, school districts and community college districts to regulate travel, meal and lodging expenses.

Cullerton created the Government Consolidation Report Act, which will require all Illinois county boards to submit a report to the General Assembly recommending units of government that may be dissolved

or consolidated. This was the first step DuPage County took a few years ago in setting up its successful government consolidation efforts. Through this model, the county is projected to save taxpayers more than \$100 million over the next 20 years.

In light of the continuous news of scandals and misuse of taxpayer dollars on state universities and community college campuses, Cullerton advanced a key reform package. He believes these reforms are necessary to end the days of bloated overpaid administrators banking on executive perks at the expense of our college students.

Cullerton is committed to reforming abuses at state community colleges and universities to keep institutions credible and costs affordable for students.

Cullerton's legislative efforts

branched out to other areas.

To honor the special bond between an officer and his or her police dog, Cullerton, a dog owner, created the Police Dog Retirement Act. Senate Bill 3129 requires a retiring police dog to be offered to the primary handler of the dog.

And to protect senior citizens' financial stability, Cullerton led efforts against taxing the retirement income. Older Illinoisans currently struggle to make ends meet on fixed incomes as Social Security remains the primary source of income for one out of five retired Illinoisans. As the budget impasse continues, crucial community programs such as Meals on Wheels have already cut meal services to seniors across DuPage County. Cullerton knows the state can't afford to balance the budget on seniors' retirement income.







# Bill Cunningham

## Agriculture chair | 18<sup>th</sup> Senate District



When the College of DuPage paid its outgoing president more than three quarters of a million dollars just to quit last year, State Senator Bill Cunningham was, like most of Illinois, shocked. In response, he put together an investigative subcommittee to look into the compensation and perks public colleges and universities offer their executives.

The ensuing report details what's been described as a higher education "salary and benefits arms race" at taxpayer expense. That report continues to drive Cunningham's legislative agenda as he focuses on reforms to rein in out-of-control spending and bring new accountability and transparency to higher education executive spending.

His series of reforms seeks to establish newfound transparency and accountability in college administrations in the wake of the College of DuPage and similar controversies on other campuses.

For instance, lame-duck college and university boards would be prohibited from making last-minute changes to executives' contracts, a provision Cunningham said should end sweetheart deals by outgoing boards.

Other proposals seek to ban

the use of taxpayer and tuition dollars to fund bonuses for college presidents. Yet another stops car and housing allowances from being counted as salary so college executives can sweeten their pensions.

Cunningham said his reforms serve the dual purpose of demanding higher ethical standards while also trying to control higher education costs.

But bringing a degree of common sense to higher education executive spending wasn't Cunningham's only priority at the Capitol this session.

Cunningham also sought to improve how DNA test kits for sexual assault cases are handled. His proposal follows news out of the Village of Robbins where multiple genetic test kits were found to have had potential matches that were not investigated.

Senator Cunningham worked with Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart to come up with a proposed law, Senate Bill 2221, that would streamline the testing and notification system throughout the state. Anytime the state crime lab finds a potential match, both the local police department and the area state's attorney would be notified.

As the new chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, Cunningham also fought to protect funding for agriculture education programs targeted for cuts by Gov. Bruce Rauner. Illinois is home to a world-leading agriculture economy featuring several corporate headquarters of key agribusiness giants. Cunningham argues the state should be strengthening its economic power by investing more in agriculture education.





# William Delgado

## Education chair | 2<sup>nd</sup> Senate District



Senator William Delgado has represented his community in Springfield since 1999. Illinois has seen multiple

governors and legislators come and go since then, but his leadership in Springfield has remained constant.

Continuing his work last session, Delgado made the fight for the vulnerable immigrant and minority communities in Illinois his top priority.

When the Latino Treatment Agency, an Elgin-based rehabilitation treatment center that specializes in treating Latin American and minority clients, announced that a lack of state funding threatened its operations, Senator Delgado's call to action was swift.

Alongside Senators Martinez and Noland and colleagues from the House, Senator Delgado demanded that funding be released to keep the Latino Treatment Center's doors open, and to send the message that budget impasse or not, our most vulnerable citizens will not be made into political pawns.

Shortly afterward, the state comptroller's office announced that funding would be released so the Latino Treatment Agency

could continue its operations.

This was not his only fight to secure necessary care options for those in Illinois, however. He also supported a plan to extend the All Kids program in Illinois. As a lifeline for families who need comprehensive health care for their children, the All Kids program is essential for many families in Delgado's West Side district.

With his support, the plan won approval in the Senate.

In addition to his advocacy for vulnerable populations in Illinois, Delgado chairs the Senate Education Committee. His oversight of the committee helps him to protect students' educational opportunities in Illinois.

Believing that the state's PARCC assessment can be unnecessarily stressful for some

students, Delgado proposed legislation that would allow parents to opt their children out of the test. Learning and development should be the main focus of schooling, and stressful state testing can be detrimental to that.

His commitment to guaranteeing a quality education for all students in Illinois also led to his support of the education funding overhaul plan, as well as a plan to ensure that students are tested using assessments that colleges will accept during their admissions process.

Senator Delgado's advocacy helps to improve and promote plans that ensure the success of citizens of all walks of life and all ages.







# Gary Forby

## Labor chair | 59<sup>th</sup> Senate District



As human services shuttered at Illinois' southernmost tip and the public university serving the

region was threatened because of the state budget stalemate, Senator Gary Forby fought for jobs, services and education for working-class families in southeastern Illinois.

A former farmer and small business owner, Forby represents residents in all or part of 13 counties, stretching roughly from McLeansboro in Hamilton County to Cairo on the Mississippi River.

His district is in the heart of southern Illinois coal country where the industry – once a robust economic driver – has fallen on tough times. Jobs are a vital concern for his constituents.

As mines have announced closures and layoffs, Forby continues to urge Congress to rethink energy policies that drive coal jobs out of southern Illinois communities like Harrisburg. He visited miners so he could hear their concerns and those of their families. He regularly advocates for the use of Illinois coal by Illinois power plants, rather than importing it from western states.

A proud member of Operating Engineers' and Laborers'

International unions for nearly 40 years, Forby is a champion for working-class families, for competitive wages and benefits and for fair labor negotiations. He opposes efforts to make Illinois a right-to-work state and to erode collective bargaining rights.

He worked hard to keep state dollars flowing to Southern Illinois University and its flagship campus in Carbondale. The university is a key employer and the only four-year public institution in southern Illinois. Forby voted for funding for higher education, which continues to be starved because of budget vetoes by Republican Gov. Bruce Rauner.

Forby voted to fund the state's Monetary Award Program, which provides college tuition grants to students who might not otherwise be able to afford college. He also voted for the

state to honor its financial commitment to Amtrak, which is a primary means of transportation for many students who attend SIU in Carbondale.

Finally, he demanded that southern Illinois communities receive money for local road improvements – funds that belong to local governments but are processed by the state and weren't being passed along because of the budget stalemate. He also pressed for a measure to prevent governors from raiding the state's road fund for purposes other than transportation projects, which put people to work.

A staunch defender of the Second Amendment, Forby in January called on President Barack Obama to dial down anti-gun rhetoric and be mindful of people's right to bear arms.





# Napoleon Harris III

## *15<sup>th</sup> Senate District*



As the world watched Mizzou's football team and other students fight for their civil rights last November, some Missouri legislators turned their backs on them by proposing legislation that would strip them of their scholarships for protesting. State Senator Napoleon Harris III couldn't allow a legislative idea like the one in Missouri to get a foothold in Illinois.

Harris, a former Northwestern football player, led legislation that protects college students' freedom of speech by prohibiting colleges from revoking athletic and academic scholarships as a result of protesting. The Campus Demonstration Act upholds the role higher institutions play in fostering the growth and confidence of their students.

Continuing his focus on protecting the rights and best interest of the people of Illinois, Harris introduced legislation that would allow Illinois citizens to recall elected officials statewide. After the poor handling of the Laquan McDonald case and the public outrage toward Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Harris was disturbed by the way things unfolded.

Public officials should be held to a higher standard, and allowing them to serve full terms after losing the trust of their constituency only further erodes public confidence in government. When the public loses trust in an elected official, Harris argues there should be a mechanism available that holds that official accountable.

With Laquan's legacy in mind, Harris has continued to look into ways to improve the life of young people in Chicago, the South Suburbs and the state. One major issue facing young people is finding employment. Senator Harris sponsored an initiative that creates the Youth Unemployment Task Force.

The task force will examine youth unemployment throughout the state and especially its effects on young people of color. From

this exercise, recommendations will be made on how to improve employment among young people of color.

While tackling big issues in the legislature, Harris also finds ways to make yearly tasks a little easier for his constituents. Drivers may soon be able to register their vehicle and set the expiration date to their birthday, making it easier to remember when to renew their registrations.

Senator Harris works to advocate for his community and stands at the forefront of issues facing our state and country. His commitment to the people of Illinois is reflected in his legislative platform.







# Michael E. Hastings

## *19<sup>th</sup> Senate District*



In the 21st century, elementary and secondary education use technology more and more to create a better learning

environment. That means many schools have to contract with third parties and share confidential student data.

In light of the abuses that we hear about concerning data leaks today, Senator Michael Hastings felt it necessary to take preventive steps to protect children throughout the South Suburbs and the whole state. He proposed legislation to create the state's first Student Online Personal Protection Act. It would prohibit the operator of a website or online service from using student data for anything that is not furthering the mission of the school.

Besides protecting children at school, Hastings also has been an advocate of bringing outdated child support statutes into this century to ensure that our laws match the society and the families of today.

Hastings sponsored legislation to update the 1984 child support statutes because they failed to consider the changing family dynamics facing Illinois. The update would allow for a more

adequate standard of support for children.

The legislation would make Illinois the 39th state to introduce the "income shares" model to determine child support. It would consider the income of both parents to determine the level of support for the child using the parent's ability to pay. The archaic law harms children, and this legislation increases protections for children in non-traditional family situations.

Hastings also pushed for legislation that would hold the Illinois Department of Revenue more accountable by allowing local governments to properly audit sales tax data. Senate Bill 2933 would allow local governments to enter into confidentiality agreements with third parties so they can share sales tax data for auditing

purposes. This allows the local governments to put a check on the state.

Currently, only two people in a local government are allowed to access the sales tax data, leading to cities and villages being unable to protect themselves from mistakes the state makes. Hastings desires to protect the local governments of the South Suburbs when it comes to collecting their sales tax revenues.

Along with a full workload in Springfield, Hastings and his wife Katie welcomed their first son Mikey to the Hastings family this year.





# Linda Holmes

Commerce and Economic Development chair | 42<sup>nd</sup> Senate District



State Sen. Linda Holmes continues to be a strong voice for the environment, local redevelopment and

government consolidation in Illinois. To that end, Holmes joined bipartisan efforts to examine unfunded mandates and consolidation, sponsored important conservation legislation and supported a program that has redeveloped an important historical landmark for modern use in Aurora.

Holmes fought for conservation efforts in 2015 and 2016. She pushed for a new law that adds more invasive plant species to the state's list, making sure species that crowd out local flora and upset the balance of ecosystems are monitored and their spread prevented. Holmes also advanced legislation that would ban the use of inhumane trapping techniques in the hunting of bobcats. Advocates took notice: the Illinois Environmental Council recognized her as one of the staunchest supporters of the environment in the Senate in the past year.

Holmes also argued for a continuation of an important local redevelopment tool. This past year, a major redevelopment

of the St. Charles Hospital in Aurora took a historic property in the 42nd Senate District that had fallen into disuse and has begun the process of renovating it to become a new senior housing project. The project was possible through the use of the River Edge Redevelopment Zone program. Holmes plans to continue to argue for the extension of the program beyond its sunset in 2016 to allow for more such revitalizations of local history.

Holmes also worked with a bipartisan group to try to find practical solutions to consolidate government and reduce unfunded mandates. As part of Lt. Gov. Evelyn Sanguinetti's task force, Holmes argued in favor of expanding government consolidation while maintaining local control. She appeared on Chicago Tonight to talk about her

participation in the task force and the importance of ensuring consolidation doesn't take a one-size-fits-all approach.

Holmes also stood up for the rights of patients and consumers by sponsoring legislation that would require health insurance companies provide for an adequate number of health care specialists within their insurance networks so that policyholders never have to choose between paying out-of-network costs or traveling great distances to get proper care. The same legislation would also require insurers to notify policyholders when one of their doctors is dropped from the network – a potentially costly, confusing and burdensome development for people managing long term health concerns.







# Toi Hutchinson

## Revenue chair | 40<sup>th</sup> Senate District



Higher levels of student success and lower rates of crime among youth are just a few of the many benefits quality after-

school programs provide.

But for the more than 1,500 Illinois youth who lost their after-school program due to the budget impasse, finding constructive activities during the critical hours between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. in some of Illinois' most impoverished neighborhoods and communities can be next to impossible.

Senator Hutchinson worked with advocates across Illinois this year to ensure the state makes after-school programs a priority, passing a bill requiring the state to award grants through the Teen REACH program to community-based organizations that provide after-school services to at-risk youth.

In the face of the governor's proposals to totally eliminate funds for Teen REACH while many communities are still seeing high levels of violence, Hutchinson understands the importance that after-school programs play in the academic success of students.

Hutchinson also worked to ensure that support for students continues through college. Many

students rely on funding through the Monetary Assistance Program (MAP). As a former MAP and Pell Grant recipient, Hutchinson knows firsthand just how hard it can be to afford a semester of school. Earlier this year, when universities were threatening layoffs and closure and MAP recipients weren't receiving funding, Hutchinson worked to provide some funding to higher educational institutions.

Hutchinson continued her longstanding commitment to the unique set of issues that affect women in the workplace and at home. She passed a bill making it easier for the nearly 65 percent of American women who currently use birth control to access contraceptives. Understanding that women use contraceptives for many different reasons, Hutchinson fought to ensure

women have access to birth control and aren't stymied by insurance company bureaucrats or politicians.

For 20 years, Pay Equity Day has highlighted the disparity in workplace earnings between men and women. Held on April 12, the day represents the extra days a full-time working woman would have to work just to make the same as a man in the previous year. Hutchinson brought attention to the issue of pay equity among her colleagues, passing a resolution highlighting the \$430,000 women stand to lose over a 40-year career if the gap isn't closed.





# Emil Jones III

Local Government chair | 14<sup>th</sup> Senate District



Chicago State University announced that it would be unable to pay for operational costs after

March 1 due to the unprecedented seven month-long budget impasse. Without a budget, university students across the state who are recipients of MAP grants and tuition assistance are increasingly concerned about the prospect of not graduating.

In March, Senator Emil Jones III introduced legislation that helps college students who are facing financial hardships. The measure, Senate Bill 2941, prohibits universities and community colleges from denying a student the opportunity to register for classes and prohibits them from refusing to issue a transcript to a student because of an outstanding debt.

"Currently, our governor's inaction on the budget has forced over 150,000 students out of Monetary Awards Programs (MAP) grants, which provide qualified students with tuition assistance," Jones said. "Since this MAP grant funding hasn't been enacted, many students weren't able to register for classes or get copies of their transcripts for other scholarships, pushing intended graduation dates back

even further for many students."

To help those college students, Jones supported a \$600 million higher education deal that kept the doors open at Chicago State University, Eastern Illinois University and other state schools.

As Senate Chairman of the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus, Jones has tackled social justice issues and advocated on behalf of underrepresented individuals.

Jones proposed Senate Resolution 1782, urging the U.S. Congress to recognize the Ku Klux Klan as a domestic terrorist organization and pursue dismantling this hate group with the same fervor used to protect the United States from other manifestations of terrorism.

In addition, Jones proposed Senate Resolution 1752 to address bigotry aimed at

transgender persons and send a clear message that Illinois is a tolerant state. The resolution urges the North Carolina General Assembly to repeal anti-trans bathroom discrimination measures such as the "Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act."

Furthermore, it affirms support for protecting and advancing the constitutional rights and equitable treatment of all and expresses opposition to discrimination, prejudice, homophobia and transphobia while urging Governor Bruce Rauner to prohibit all non-essential state travel to North Carolina and Mississippi until those states take the proper measures to repeal these laws.







# David Koehler

Environment and Conservation chair | 46<sup>th</sup> Senate District



Each year, Pekin Community High School students learn construction skills by building homes through the school's

building trade program. The school then sells the home, and the money pays for the next year of the program.

That seems simple enough, but the state bureaucracy can complicate the process. Under current law, these houses must be sold the same way as other state-owned real estate is sold – a sometimes convoluted process that leaves the school district jumping through time-consuming hoops.

Enter State Senator Dave Koehler.

The Peoria Democrat sponsored common-sense legislation, SB 2833, to speed up and simplify the process by allowing the school to use real estate agents and avoid the state auction and bidding process.

It's just one example of how Koehler's 2016 legislative agenda continued to focus on the people and communities of the 46th Senate District.

He continued to support area colleges and their students at the Capitol.

With schools and students increasingly victimized by the lingering budget impasse caused by

Gov. Bruce Rauner, Koehler helped approve emergency funding for Spoon River College, Illinois Central College and a financial aid program that assists students there as well as at Peoria's Bradley University.

Koehler similarly backed an overhaul of how the state funds public schools, as Peoria students and those at many other local districts are increasingly shortchanged by the state's outdated funding system.

In addition, Sen. Koehler proposed legislation to require the staffs of elderly care facilities and community programs to be adequately trained to deal with Alzheimer's and dementia patients. Over 200,000 Illinois residents are affected by Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. That number is supposed to increase by 25 percent in the next decade because of aging Baby Boomers.

Senate Bill 2301 answers the need for reforms by ensuring facilities have trained professional staffs to deal with these increases.

Drawing on his experience as a labor negotiator, State Senator Dave Koehler served as a voice of reason for Central Illinois this past year, pushing the governor to back away from extreme demands and to negotiate in good faith with public sector workers.

Koehler, the former executive director of the Peoria Area Labor Management Council, urged the governor to not walk away from labor talks with the state's largest employee union, whose members remain without a contract. Koehler stood up for unions and encouraged both sides to compromise to resolve the differences between the governor's administration and the union.





# Steven Landek

State Government and Veterans Affairs chair | 12<sup>th</sup> Senate District



With a historic budget impasse dominating the conversation in Springfield in 2016, Senator Steve Landek promoted

bipartisan efforts to increase government efficiency and reduce the burden of regulations on local governments and small businesses.

As someone who has already reduced the size of government as an elected municipal mayor, he supported government consolidation efforts as a member of the Local Government Committee. But instead of politicians in Springfield deciding what is best for local communities, he ensured that we instead empower the communities these governments serve to decide what is best for them and give them the tools to consolidate if they choose.

While there is some money to be saved through local government consolidation, Senator Landek believes the state should lead by example. This is why he introduced a constitutional amendment to consolidate the lieutenant governor's office.

"We need to walk the walk when it comes to consolidation," said Landek. "While some savings can be realized through local government consolidation, streamlining and consolidating

state government has the potential to save more money for taxpayers that could be reinvested in our schools and infrastructure."

In the same vein, Senator Landek introduced legislation this year to phase out legislator pensions for senators. While the Illinois Supreme Court has ruled you cannot touch current pensions, this law would close the pension system off for future members of the Illinois Senate and save taxpayers tens of millions of dollars over the coming decades.

Utilizing his experience as a business owner, Landek continued to carefully study the great quantity of proposals in the Senate and consistently voiced opposition to legislation that would increase the costs of doing businesses in Illinois. His efforts earned him a "pro-manufacturing rating" by the Technology and Manufacturing

Association, and he was the highest ranked among Democrats in the Illinois Senate.

"Easing regulations and unfunded mandates should be a priority for us," said Landek. "Doing both encourages growth in the private sector and allows local governments to invest more time and money addressing the needs of their community."

Constituents and community leaders from across the diverse 12th Senate District visited Senator Landek at the Capitol throughout session. He hosted Mayor Robert Lovero and school leaders from the Village of Berwyn to discuss the impact of education funding reform on local schools, visited with students from Morton College in Cicero and met with leaders of Enlace Chicago in Little Village.







# Andy Manar

## *48<sup>th</sup> Senate District*



Senator Andy Manar has never been one to shy away from taking on a tough legislative issue. During

his time on the Education Funding Advisory Committee, he saw the reality: that Illinois' current system of funding public education is completely broken.

Students across Illinois suffer from a lack of funding. Everyone admitted that the formula was broken, but nobody knew exactly what could be done.

Putting his experience on the Education Committee to good use, Senator Manar has traveled to virtually every corner of the state to meet with students, teachers and community leaders and listen to their concerns about education funding.

Those conversations helped him to craft Senate Bill 231, a comprehensive education funding reform plan that would create a new, modern formula that would distribute money based on student need. After filing his plan, Manar continued to take advice from people across the state and legislators from both sides of the aisle.

Despite the ongoing fight in Springfield, Senator Manar maintained his commitment to

this reform and oversaw Senate Bill 231 passing the Senate in May.

In addition to improving Illinois' educational landscape, Manar was the leading voice in the effort to bring automatic voter registration to Illinois. During the 2016 primary election, many Illinois voters were subjected to waiting in line for hours to get to the polls, which forced local courts to intervene and keep them open longer.

These problems could have been addressed had Illinois already implemented automatic voter registration.

Manar's plan would streamline the voter registration process and eliminate several of the duplicative steps in the process. This would improve voter turnout and help the government in Illinois be more reflective of the

voices of the people.

That measure, Senate Bill 250, won approval from the Senate in May.

While protecting students' education and voters' constitutional rights, Manar also put forth legislation to protect the once-booming coal industry in Southern Illinois.

Manar paired with his Southern Illinois colleagues to create Senate Bill 3426, which reinvests in the clean coal industry in Illinois and provides a pathway for Illinois companies to do the same.

The plan would bring needed jobs back to Southern Illinois and revitalize an industry that helped create Illinois' modern industrial economy.





# Pat McGuire

## Higher Education chair | 43<sup>rd</sup> Senate District



The lack of a proper higher education budget for the 2015-16 academic year meant that Illinois' colleges and universities

faced an existential threat.

Several schools were forced to lay off employees, including some educators, and one — Chicago State University — was very close to shutting down completely.

And not only did the institutions go without operational funding, thousands of Illinois' neediest college students were forced to go without the Monetary Award Program grants that they were promised. These students faced an unappealing decision: take on more debt to continue their schooling or just quit altogether.

State Senator Pat McGuire's main focus this spring has been on higher education. As chairman of the Senate Higher Education Committee, McGuire has played a key role in ensuring that schools and students received at least some of the funding that was promised to them by the governor. Several proposals that funded higher education in a stopgap fashion were shepherded through the Higher Education Committee with McGuire's help. One of those was Senate Bill 2059, which the governor quickly signed to avert

the looming financial disaster faced by Chicago State.

Other higher education proposals that McGuire sponsored included SB 3023, which revitalized the Higher Education Cooperation Act by expanding the sources of funding for the public-private partnerships that help spur innovation in academic and student success programs. This expansion will help Illinois reach its goal of 60 percent of adult workers having a post-secondary credential by 2025.

McGuire is chief co-sponsor of SB 2196, known as the Student Access Bill, which enables undocumented students to be eligible for most state-funded forms of higher education financial aid. One study has estimated that an additional 1,500 students at Illinois' four-year universities could be served by the Student Access Bill.

McGuire also sits on the Senate

Appropriations II Committee to help develop the state budget.

Throughout the spring session, he has heard firsthand the heartbreak and hardship that Illinois' budget morass has caused for some of the state's most vulnerable citizens as vital social services remained unfunded. He's using the testimony as motivation to ensure that these citizens don't again fall through the cracks because of budget brinksmanship.

He's also sided with public employees in their fight for a new and fair contract. AFSCME workers have been without a contract for nearly a year. McGuire supports HB 580, which implements interest arbitration and is state workers' last, best hope to avoid a damaging strike or lockout.







# Julie Morrison

## *29<sup>th</sup> Senate District*



As a former township official, Senator Julie Morrison knows firsthand the important services provided by Illinois'

nearly 1,500 township bodies. Her experience in local government also gives her an insight into ways to make government more efficient for taxpayers.

Morrison teamed with Senator Melinda Bush on two local government consolidation proposals this year to empower townships and local residents to make township government more effective and sustainable. Morrison's plan would remove regulations that prohibit commonsense, locally driven efforts that provide more efficiencies to residents.

Next, Morrison turned her attention next to state government, introducing an ethics package that would require state legislators to publicly disclose potential conflicts of interest before casting a vote on any legislation. In addition, her plan would strengthen safeguards against politicians using political clout to interfere with state decisions on sensitive issues relating to university admissions and hiring at state agencies.

Morrison also worked on several pieces of legislation to stem the high rate of gun deaths

in Illinois. She passed a proposal to strengthen Illinois' already strong mental health reporting laws by ensuring information for every county is reported when a person is found unfit to possess a FOID card. Morrison also worked on a plan that would expand National Instant Criminal Background Check System denial notifications. When a Chicago Sun-Times report found many police departments across the state failing to investigate when FOID cards are not turned in, Morrison took action. Her plan would require police departments to follow up with individuals and ensure FOID cards are not in the possession of those unfit to possess firearms.

Expanding the rights and protections of medical patients and individuals with disabilities was another focus this year.

She passed a bill giving more flexibility to patients who are

benefiting from a certain drug but are required by their insurance companies to take a less-costly medication. Known as step therapy, the insurance practice can be a serious health concern for many patients who are stable on their medications or who have a history of trying medications that are ineffective.

Morrison also worked to expand court protections for individuals with disabilities who have been the victim of physical or sexual assault crimes. Her plan would expand what is known as the hearsay exception that allows individuals with disabilities to designate someone to testify in court on their behalf. With victims of horrific crimes often unable to take the witness stand and confront an accuser, Morrison's plan would ensure justice is not denied simply because of a disability.





# John G. Mulroe

## Public Health chair | 10<sup>th</sup> Senate District



Emerging as one of the leading public health voices in the state, Senator John Mulroe continued to use his role atop the Senate's Public Health Committee to try to improve the lives of the people of Illinois.

This session, Mulroe took up the fight against Big Tobacco. He sponsored legislation that would prohibit the sale of cigarettes and other addictive and known cancer-causing tobacco products to teens. His proposal seeks to curtail smoking among 18-, 19- and 20-year olds by raising the legal age for purchasing cigarettes to 21 from 18.

Not only is cigarette smoking unhealthy, the resulting cancers and lung disease cost state taxpayers millions in health care expenses every year. Mulroe won the Senate's endorsement and remains focused on pushing the measure through the House.

Mulroe is also leading efforts in the Senate for a statewide initiative to ensure the medical community has what it needs to diagnose and treat rare diseases so patients with such diseases get appropriate treatment.

Rare diseases are far more common than the term would suggest. Nearly 30 million

Americans suffer from some form of rare disease, which include cystic fibrosis, muscular dystrophy and Huntington's disease. By definition, a rare disease is one that affects less than one in 2,000 people.

The Rare Disease Commission that Mulroe is helping create establishes a panel of policy experts backed by the Illinois Department of Public Health.

Recognizing that public health and public safety go hand-in-hand, Senator Mulroe also worked with police to advance needed legislation at the Capitol this past session.

For instance, in an effort to protect commuters, Mulroe lead Senate efforts to expand criminal penalties for anyone trying to hit vehicles by throwing or knocking materials off of overpasses and other elevated sections of

roadways.

And Mulroe sponsored legislation to streamline prosecutions resulting from undercover investigations. Because of the sheer size and weight of cash and currency, it is often impractical to bring to court the actual money used in cases. Mulroe's proposed law reduces this cumbersome burden by allowing prosecutors to use photographs or photocopies as evidence.

Senator Mulroe also sponsored legislation to make Veterans Day a true recognition of the sacrifices our veterans have made. His proposal makes the official holiday a paid day off for veterans and provides a tax credit to employers to cover the cost.







# Laura M. Murphy

## *28<sup>th</sup> Senate District*



In her first year in the legislature, State Senator Laura Murphy (D-Des Plaines) focused on advancing issues to

benefit the constituents of her suburban district.

When a resident of the district told her about witnessing someone lying about military service to get a veteran discount, Senator Murphy went to the Capitol and filed legislation to crack down on such misrepresentation. Anyone lying about being a veteran to get a reduced price or other discount would face a fine of at least \$100.

Murphy guided the legislation through the Senate, making it her first proposal to advance since she was appointed late last year.

It's just one example of how Murphy listens to and looks out for the people of the 28th Senate District.

While O'Hare International Airport is a major economic driver for the region, living close to the airport does have its drawbacks. Noise pollution from planes flying overhead is a burden to area residents who hear flights throughout the day. Recently, the problem has gotten worse in some areas as the airport has added runways.

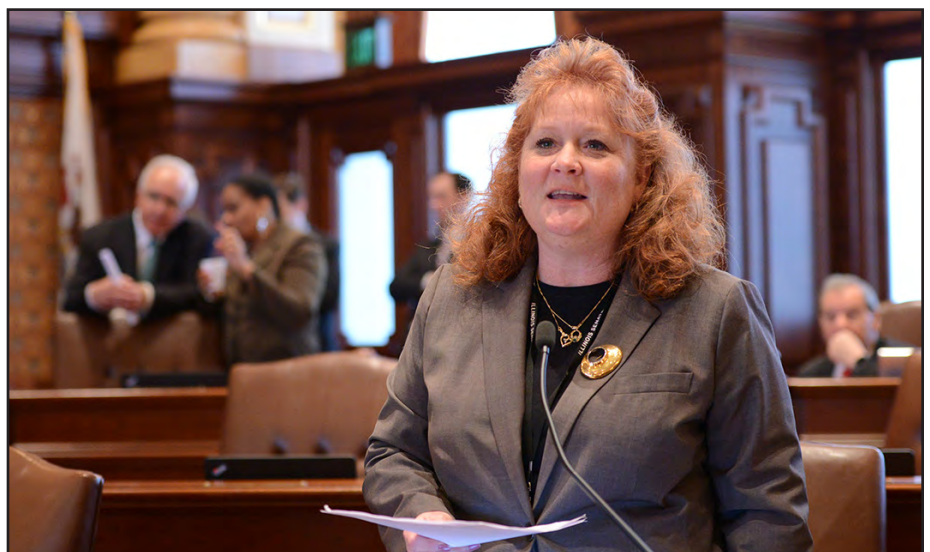
Murphy has also sponsored two pieces of legislation to help area residents by cutting back on noise generated at the airport. The first, Senate Resolution 1552, calls on the Federal Aviation Administration to assist the City of Chicago in recalibrating the Community Noise Equivalent Level standards. This will allow for more accurate, comprehensive data collection about how the noise pollution affects the area. The second proposal introduced by Murphy, Senate Resolution 1553, urges the Chicago Department of Aviation to create a more comprehensive Fly Quiet Program to cut back on the noise pollution in the area.

Murphy also sponsored legislation to impose leadership term limits of 10 years on the Speaker of the House, President of the Senate and minority leaders in

both parties. She believes this will increase transparency and limit the power an individual is able to accrue in the legislature.

In addition, she sponsored legislation to increase diversity by encouraging more women serve on corporate boards, improving the appearance and reliability of power lines by recommending they be buried rather than strung overhead and expanding special education students' ability to play school sports.

In the district, Sen. Murphy also focuses on constituent service. She has held multiple senior fairs, fraud seminars and internet safety workshops to provide constituents with valuable services. Her district office also regularly schedules mobile office hours around the district to maximize their accessibility to her constituents.





# Michael Noland

## Criminal Law chair | 22<sup>nd</sup> Senate District



After almost a year without a budget and in a state with dire financial trouble, Senator Michael Noland utilized his

position to bring forth proposals that sought to address the difficult questions of state funding, both where it goes and where it comes from.

He worked to begin discussions to address the question of how we can properly and more fairly fund the important and critical services the state provides. And he worked with his colleagues to imagine viable solutions for a more sustainable future in the state that safeguards these programs. Through several bills he introduced, Noland spurred the necessary conversation about how we balance the fiscal integrity of the state with the needs of the most vulnerable among us.

One of the largest and most important components of the state's budget is education. But the system the state uses faces increasing criticism for not only lacking adequate resources but not equitably dispersing dollars to meet students' needs. Noland knows this all too well because of how the state continually shortchanges Elgin-based U-46,

the state's second largest public school district.

This is also an area Senator Noland focused on in his last year with the General Assembly. He co-sponsored legislation that would rework the state's classroom funding formula into one that is fair for all students.

His school funding reform push was one of several ways Noland worked to address the needs of local schools. For instance, he passed legislation to provide school districts more options when seeking candidates for superintendent.

Throughout session Senator Noland strove to be a voice of reason, fighting to save funding for treatment and mental health centers along with funding for colleges, universities and student financial aid. He organized and led press conferences calling

on the governor to be held accountable for the lives he is affecting with his budget cuts.

Further, in his role as chairman of the Senate's Criminal Law Committee and member of the Judiciary Committee, he carefully monitored laws that affected public safety, looking at each issue judiciously and questioning whether the legislation will truly achieve its goals or have unintended consequences that would infringe on the privacy rights of the people in Illinois.







# Kwame Raoul

Judiciary chair | Pension Investments co-chair | Restorative Justice co-chair | 13<sup>th</sup> Senate District



Senator Kwame Raoul knew last year's landmark law enforcement overhaul wouldn't be a quick fix. But

as a member of the governor's task force on criminal justice and sentencing reform, and as chair of the Senate's Committee on Police Professionalism, he's continued to put in the time and hard work to keep improving Illinois' approach to public safety.

Despite recent reforms, problems remain: excessive use of force by police, racial disparities in the criminal justice system, prison overcrowding, juvenile offenders on the fast track to adult crime and a lack of opportunity for ex-offenders, among others. This year, Raoul has introduced evidence-based solutions to many of these problems.

Recognizing that officers under the command of Jon Burge were not the only ones to torture suspects in custody of the Chicago Police Department, Raoul sponsored legislation that broadens the scope and mission of the Torture Inquiry and Relief Commission, which currently hears the cases of individuals who claim Burge's men forced them to make false confessions.

Raoul secured passage of a measure requiring that more youth who have committed low-level crimes be given treatment and supervision in their communities instead of inside expensive juvenile facilities far from home. The same legislation also makes it easier for minors to have their arrest records expunged.

While many communities are purchasing and deploying officer-worn cameras, Raoul is still working with the law enforcement community, as well as civil rights groups and community advocates, to tweak Illinois' laws concerning the use of body cameras and the images they capture. His committee on Police Professionalism is also looking into the possibility of licensing police officers in order to make it harder for an officer

with a history of misconduct to get hired by another department.

Criminal justice reform was not Raoul's sole focus. He also advanced legislation boosting wages for in-home aides to the elderly, regulating fantasy sports websites, requiring better reporting of student athlete concussions and reforming the redistricting process. Responding to President Obama's call for a nationwide approach to Congressional redistricting reform, he introduced legislation that would make Illinois the first to adopt a new process for drawing fair maps. The initiative received bipartisan support, bolstering Raoul's reputation as a legislator capable of reaching resolutions, even in the most difficult of political environments.





# Martin Sandoval

## Transportation chair | 11<sup>th</sup> Senate District



Senator Sandoval continues to be an advocate for social justice for the 11th district of Illinois, tackling issues for new

Americans, the way we fund our schools and making sure children have health insurance and social services are funded properly.

When a group of ninth graders from Solorio Academy High School in Gage Park, home of the third highest number of undocumented immigrants in Illinois, came to Senator Sandoval to change Illinois statute to eliminate the word “alien,” Senator Sandoval stepped up to champion their issue. SB 3021 was a measure to replace the word “alien” with “undocumented immigrant” in Illinois statutes. Students from Mrs. Hush’s ninth grade class felt that changing this word would make undocumented immigrants feel more like they were part of this country. As President Obama said, “What makes someone American isn’t just blood or birth, but allegiance to our founding principles and faith in the idea that anyone—from anywhere—can write the next chapter of our story.” SB 3021 passed the Senate and is now in the House.

Senator Sandoval also co-sponsored legislation with Senator Manar to change the way schools

are funded in Illinois. Senator Sandoval, a proven advocate on school construction, who has worked with Senator Manar for three years on this issue,” said “this is an important step to make sure that low-income and minority students in my district get the education that they deserve.” Chicago Public Schools as well as Lyons, Summit, Argo Community, Berwyn, Cicero and Burbank schools look to benefit from the new formula.

Thousands of children will be protected from losing their health insurance under legislation passed by Senator Iris Y. Martinez and co-sponsored by Senator Sandoval. The Covering All Kids Health Insurance Act is set to expire in July of this year, but this legislation would extend it to 2019. Extending the act would prevent more than 40,000 children, regardless of their legal status, from losing their health

insurance coverage.

Senator Sandoval worked with Senator Steans to pass a stopgap budget that will offer relief to many social service providers struggling to stay afloat during the funding impasse, which has now entered its eleventh month. Senate Bill 2038 releases \$715 million from the Commitment to Human Services Fund and a number of smaller funds in order to pay for community mental health care, homelessness assistance, sexual assault victims’ services, services for people with disabilities, meals for low-income seniors, addiction treatment, breast and cervical cancer screenings and more.

Senator Sandoval’s agenda as a lawmaker continues to focus on children, working families, seniors and veterans on the Southwest side of Chicago and West Suburban Cook County.







# Steve Stadelman

## *34<sup>th</sup> Senate District*



In 2016, State Senator Steve Stadelman (D-Rockford), again focused his legislative agenda around helping the

Rockford community.

Every year, Illinois receives approximately \$970 million in federal education funding to hire extra teachers for students in low-income areas. Unfortunately, because of Illinois' complex pension laws, a significant amount of these funds, meant to help children in many of Illinois' poorest communities, go directly into the pension system. This year, Sen. Stadelman passed Senate Bill 436, which will allow school districts to reduce the amount they are required to pay for Title 1 teachers to be in line with the same rate paid for state-funded teachers. Under Stadelman's proposal, Rockford schools could receive up to an additional \$2 million.

Stadelman also passed legislation to require law enforcement officials to accept cash for bail payments. The proposal was brought to him by a constituent whose minor son was arrested for a traffic offense last year. When the father arrived at the juvenile detention center to bail out his son, the credit

card machine was broken and the center had a policy to refuse to accept cash. Because of the technology malfunction, the son was forced to sit in jail for the entire weekend.

Most notably this year, Stadelman questioned officials from the governor's office during a senate budget hearing about funding for Rosecrance Triage Center located in Rockford. The Triage Center was initially promised additional funding a few years ago when Singer Mental Health Center was closed by the state. However, this year, the governor eliminated funding for the center. Due to the lack of funding, the facility was scheduled to hold a vote to potentially close the triage center. Following Stadelman's questioning at the committee, the governor's office announced they

would release the funds to allow Rosecrance to stay open through the remainder of the fiscal year.

Stadelman has also been focused on prioritizing funding for higher education to allow community colleges and four-year universities to stay open. Rock Valley College, located in Stadelman's district, was forced to lay off employees when it went without state funding for nearly seven months. Fortunately, after months of negotiation, a proposal backed by Stadelman passed to fund Rock Valley College and other higher education institutions to allow them to avoid further layoffs.





# Heather Steans

**Appropriations I chair | Oversight of Medicaid Managed Care chair | 7<sup>th</sup> Senate District**



As one of the Senate's two appropriations committee chairs, Senator Heather Steans continued the difficult but necessary

work of negotiating an end to the budget impasse while securing stopgap funding for vital programs whenever possible.

In Springfield, she heard many hours of testimony from government agencies, social services providers, universities and ordinary people whose lives have been turned upside down. Back home in her district, she held town halls on the budget to keep constituents informed and to hear from those directly affected.

Meanwhile, she continued to host events ranging from job fairs to a seminar on knowing your rights when stopped by law enforcement, to a presentation on education funding reform in an effort to provide opportunities and inform the public.

In addition to achieving budgetary relief, including the release of federal funding and stopgap measures for higher education and human services, Steans introduced pioneering environmental, health and good government reforms. Her Lead in Drinking Water Prevention Act will set more stringent guidelines

for testing lead levels in water systems, so Illinois communities can avoid situations like that of Flint, Michigan.

As she has in past legislative sessions, Steans championed the cause of higher wages for the workers who care for Illinoisans with developmental disabilities. And, continuing her tireless efforts to improve both efficiency and quality of care in the Medicaid program, she introduced legislation to exempt nursing homes from Medicaid's four-prescription cap so that senior citizens with complex conditions can access the medications they need more easily.

Building on the work of previous years, Steans secured passage of a measure to decriminalize the possession of small amounts of marijuana. While there is little to no racial gap in the use of the drug, African-Americans in Illinois are

arrested for its possession at a rate seven times that of whites. Making low-level marijuana possession a civil violation (punishable by a fine) rather than a crime will address a major inequity in the criminal justice system and also free up resources to investigate and prosecute more serious crimes.

Steans also joined President Obama in pushing for changes to how political boundary lines are drawn in Illinois. Obama repeated his call for a better system during a February speech in Springfield.

Agreeing with the president that constituents should pick the politicians who represent them (not vice-versa), Steans took over sponsorship of a constitutional amendment that would remove politics from the process and assign the map-drawing responsibility to an independent commission.







# Patricia Van Pelt

## *5<sup>th</sup> Senate District*



The murder of Laquan McDonald shocked the city if not the nation, prompting outrage and newfound

attention to issues Patricia Van Pelt first raised as an outspoken community activist and now pushes as a member of the Illinois Senate.

At the Capitol this spring, Van Pelt sponsored key reforms intended to promote social justice and increased accountability among government law enforcement agencies. “Mistrust of law enforcement is plaguing our communities. There’s not a week that goes by that I don’t get a complaint from my neighbors in the district,” said Van Pelt.

Frustrated over the bureaucratic foot-dragging regarding the release of police dash camera videos from the McDonald crime scene, Van Pelt sponsored SB 2210 to send a message and increase the transparency of the process. Her proposal reinforces that these videos are public records and would require that if a police department wants to deny a public records request on a certain video, it would have to get a court order.

And Van Pelt won Senate approval for a proposed law giving children in police custody greater protection when being interrogated

by police. Senate Bill 2370 would require any child 15 or younger to have an attorney present during custodial interrogations by police when accused of murder or sex offenses. It also would require police to recite a simplified Miranda warning for youth.

The proposal was in response to an intellectually challenged teen interrogated without a lawyer and being pressured to confess. The teen was later cleared of any crimes and ultimately received \$900,000 in a police abuse legal settlement.

These were among the key social justice initiatives Van Pelt sponsored at the Capitol this session. Others include:

SB 194: Raises the burden of proof the government must establish to forfeit an individual’s property

SB 2233: Improves transparency and accountability in police

departments by preventing the destruction of police misconduct records

Van Pelt was also active trying to win new economic opportunities for people trying to turn their lives around and needing a second chance. Her agenda includes proposals to do away with outdated prohibitions from people with criminal records ever getting certain jobs, even if they’ve rehabilitated themselves.

Arrests for marijuana possession can haunt applicants who are seeking employment with schools or parks. Van Pelt’s legislation HB 4360 gives such applicants a clean slate for offenses more than seven years old.





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*99th General Assembly - Spring 2016*

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**ADMINISTRATIVE & LOGISTICS SUPPORT**

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