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## The June Manufacturing Company

by David Larson

The Financial Panic of 1873 caused a worldwide depression that lasted longer than the Great Depression of the 1930s. It was triggered by a chain reaction of bank failures, the Great Chicago Fire, over investment in railroads and several other events. It was a time of high unemployment (and no unemployment insurance). Despite police and military suppression, labor was organizing for better wages and conditions.

Frank T. June was a small Chicago manufacturer on the corner of La Salle and Ontario Streets. This is the same corner where the Flagship McDonald's is located today. June was struggling with perfecting a competitive sewing machine.

June developed a relationship with fellow Chicagoan Barnabas Eldredge, who possessed the necessary skill in the sewing machine business, but did not have the necessary capital to manufacture his own design. At first June was a contract manufacturer for Eldredge, but by 1885, they formed a partnership.

The Panic of 1873 can be viewed as the cause of the June Manufacturing Company's move to Belvidere. With Chicago workers organizing, June looked to the west for cheap labor. In the June 9, 1886 edition of the *Belvidere Standard newspaper*, it was reported that Mr. June had toured the city and made his final decision to locate in Belvidere.

June purchased 4 acres on the Kishwaukee River in the center of town. June stated his reason for choosing Belvidere over other locations was the railroad and the lack of city indebtedness.

When June's decision to locate in Belvidere was announced, the reaction was similar to when Chrysler announced it was coming to Belvidere. Business in general was expected to flourish and the population would grow.

This turned out to be true. Belvidere's population in 1880 was 2,951, and by 1910 it was 7,253. When Chrysler came to town, the population grew from 11,223 in 1960 to 15,176 in 1980. Today, due to the 15-year housing boom from 1995 through 2008, Belvidere now has about 25,000 residents. By November 1886, the first phase of the factory had been constructed and 175 employees hired. Some members of the community became stockholders in the June Manufacturing Company, whose capitalization was \$250,000. Mr. June was elected President and Mr. Eldredge, Vice President. Local individuals who invested were General Allen C. Fuller, J. R. Balliet, and J. C. Foote, who also served on the board of directors. The June Manufacturing Company had become a locally owned enterprise. In 1890, June died and Eldredge was given the formal title of the head of the company, which, in reality, he had been since the move to Belvidere.

The Eldredge sewing machine was a new product in a market that already had well-established brand names. In those early days, the success of the business was less than secure. It has been reported that if not for Eldredge's skill in this type of business, it would have failed. The company changed the name to National Sewing Machine Company in 1892. It went on to produce many products from toys to automobiles.

The picture appears to be taken to memorialize the success of getting the factory up and running. Every employee appears someplace in the photo, and we can all guess which individual here could have been June or Eldredge.

## Ezike: 'I don't know what else we can say'

*Leaders once again implore public to wear masks, warn of 'history repeating'*

by Jerry Nowicki Capitol News Illinois

Through tears, Illinois Department of Public Health Director Dr. Ngozi Ezike once again called for widespread use of face coverings Friday after warning of increasing COVID-19 hospitalization numbers that could surpass the peaks of April and May.

"I mean it's sad to see the numbers going up again," Ezike said at a COVID-19 briefing in Chicago. "People have worked really hard to get us through the first phase, ... and as we see the numbers go up in the hospital, people are bringing more beds, trying to prepare for the COVID units again, and the staff that went through all that pain to try to save as many people as they can are seeing history repeat itself."

The virus has now claimed 9,418 lives in Illinois, with another 31 deaths reported over the previous 24 hours, including a person in their 30s, one in their 40s, two in their 60s, 11 in their 70s and the rest 80 or older.

"I've never run a marathon, but I have the utmost regard for those who've been able to train and plan and finish a marathon. But this is a difficult race when you can't actually see the endpoint, and I'm sorry that that's the message I have for you," Ezike said.

"Nevertheless, I'm asking you to fight the fatigue," she added. "Fight the urge to give up on social distancing. Fight for your kids to have safe, healthy opportunity to have in-person learning in school with teachers who were trained to teach them in the classroom. Fight to have safe, healthy environments in which we can work so that businesses can remain open so that our economies can start to thrive again. This does mean wearing your mask."

IDPH reported another 3,874 new confirmed cases of COVID-19 Friday among 82,256 test results reported over the previous 24 hours. That brought the total number of cases since the pandemic began to 364,033 among more than 7.1 million test results

*Continued on Page 2*

**COVID** *Continued page 1*  
reported.

Ezike and Gov. JB Pritzker reiterated that face coverings are the most effective means for limiting the spread of the virus, along with keeping six feet of distance from others and not gathering in large crowds. She said she is searching for a message to convey the importance of masking to all, even when meeting in private gatherings.

“And so if you’re talking about COVID fatigue from having to keep wearing a mask – think about the COVID fatigue for health care workers, respiratory therapists who are going to have to go through this whole episode again, of trying to fight for people’s lives, because we couldn’t figure out how to control this virus by doing some of the simple measures that have been prescribed,” she said.

She said the decisions of those who attend unmasked gatherings promote the spread of the virus which can then find its way to more vulnerable populations. She urged those attending unmasked gatherings to “think beyond themselves” and consider who they may unknowingly infect, especially if they have the virus but are not showing symptoms.

“All these people who work with the public on a regular basis – you cannot work from home as a bus driver,” Ezike said. “And so these people have to go to work every day as the disease is increasing throughout the state. And they’re the ones that will be dying.”

Hospitalizations for COVID-19 as of Thursday night increased by 35 from the day prior to 2,498, while intensive care bed and ventilator usage by COVID-19 patients remained well above the average of the past several weeks at 511 and 197, respectively. Statewide, 34 percent of ICU beds and 33 percent of hospital beds were available, but some regions had surge capacities below 25 percent.

That came as four of the state’s 11 mitigation regions were officially subject to increased mitigation measures and exactly half of the state’s 102 counties hit a warning level for COVID-19 spread.

Each of the 11 regions had a COVID-19 test positivity rate of 7 percent or higher, with Region 4, including the Metro East area on the Missouri border near St. Louis, hitting an 8.1 percent positivity rate. Two more days above 8 percent and the region would be subject to increased mitigations for the second time.

While Pritzker said he was not considering a statewide stay-at-home order like he levied earlier in the pandemic, he noted the state will enforce mitigation measures in the various regions subject to them.

Pritzker said he will follow emergency rules approved by a legislative rulemaking committee which allow for warnings, citations and dispersal orders for businesses not following mitigation rules. Authorities can perform checkups at locations and those not following rules “will be subject, potentially, to having proceedings initiated against them to remove their gaming or their liquor licenses,” he said.

Pritzker has noted the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity will give preference to businesses in regions that have had increased mitigations when it

distributes Business Interruption Grants funded by the federal government.

He also once again urged federal action on a measure to provide funding for state governments and more grant opportunities to small businesses that have faced business interruptions.

“I’ll continue that fight. For whatever reason, that isn’t happening, the federal officials, federal congressmen, senators, the president can’t seem to get together to get that done,” Pritzker said. “So,  
*Continued on page 3*

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**Obituaries**

- Anderson Jr, Earl, 80, Poplar Grove, October 19
- Drozynski, Edward, 97, Belvidere, October 19
- Karr, Donald, 86, Belvidere, October 25
- Knox, Kevin, 61, Belvidere, October 21
- Schultz, Barbara, 86, Belvidere, October 20
- Schwebke, Vernon, 83, Garden Prairie, Oct. 19



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**Publisher/Editor** David C. Larson  
**Senior Writer/Editorial** Charles Herbst  
**Advertising** Bethany Staniec  
**Photography** Susan Moran  
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*David Grimm April 1938 - Dec. 2000*  
*Richelle Kingsbury Aug. 1955 - June 2013*

**THE BOONE COUNTY JOURNAL**  
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Phone: (815) 544-4430 Fax: 544-4330  
[www.boonecountyjournal.com](http://www.boonecountyjournal.com)  
[news@boonecountyjournal.com](mailto:news@boonecountyjournal.com)

Each week, the Journal seeks to present a variety of voices.  
**Letters.** Every attempt will be made to print all letters received with the exception of those that are libelous or obscene. Letters should be signed and include an ID or phone number, so that we can contact the author prior to publication to verify authenticity.

**Guest columns.** Community leaders are encouraged to submit guest columns consistent with our editorial guidelines for possible inclusion in the Journal.

**Opinions.** The opinions expressed in the Journal are those of their authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of The Boone County Journal management or ownership.



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# THE BOONE COUNTY JOURNAL

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--In Our Opinion--

## The Candlestick Maker

We generally applaud the efforts of Governor Pritzker, Illinois Department of Public Health Director Dr. Ngozi Ezike, Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot and others in this state who have tried to control the Covid-19 pandemic. We believe that their swift and decisive decisions have saved many lives.

As we all know, what should be a health issue has become a political issue. While some of us have donned colorful masks and tried to make the best of a world full of cancellations and video conferences, others have led the charge to undermine reasonable public health measures. We've heard silly bromides about "freedom" and "personal choice" being used to justify going maskless in public. Others have tried to pretend that Covid-19 doesn't exist or is harmless.

Most outrageously, we've seen a group of at least a hundred otherwise intelligent (we assume) businessmen sit maskless in tight formation, posing for the *Register Star's* camera, along with Winnebago County Sheriff Gary Caruana and State Representative John Cabello. They were gathered to hear a downstate attorney encourage defiance of the governor's directives to control the spread of Covid-19.

These so-called "community leaders" are the reason Covid-19 has become such a problem in these United States. We remind them that Covid-19 is a deadly disease that strikes Republicans, Caucasians and those who watch Fox News at the same rate as Democrats and members of other races.

We have previously published a table from the Texas Medical Association, illustrating the relative riskiness of various activities. With Boone County's 7-day rolling average test positivity reaching upwards of 15 percent, we are publishing that chart again today to illustrate the riskiness of gathering in bars. This is a higher number than in any other county in either Northwestern Illinois or Chicagoland. Despite this alarming

statistic, we have yet to receive a single press release or other communication from the Boone County Health Department since the Covid-19 pandemic began.

On medical matters, we have more confidence in the physicians of the Texas Medical Association than we

do in the likes of Donald J. Trump and his ilk.

### *Disproportionate sacrifices*

In a previous editorial, we have discussed the inequities that our efforts to control Covid-19 have caused. Forcing the local candlestick maker to close his business while allowing Walmart down the street to sell candlesticks is inherently unfair. Some jurisdictions allowed Walmart to sell only necessities during a lockdown. We understand that the decision was one of practicality rather than malice. Nevertheless, it is a wrong that should be righted to the extent possible.

This past week, local State Representative Jeff Keicher wrote a thoughtful letter to the members of the Illinois Congressional Delegation. Mr. Keicher urges bipartisan relief specifically for America's local restaurants and taverns.

In his letter, Mr. Keicher stated that a large percentage of locally-owned restaurants and taverns were in danger of permanent closure. He noted that these restaurants employed many thousands of workers who now find themselves unemployed. Mr. Keicher's letter reminds us that it is these independent restaurants that form a backbone of our local culture, providing a venue for the various occasions and celebrations of our lives. Many of these establishments provide support for sports leagues, school fundraisers and the like. The loss of these traditional venues would be devastating to the ambience of our communities.

We agree with Mr. Keicher, but would add a qualification to Mr. Keicher's request. Bars and restaurants who have seen fit to defy state closing orders in Illinois or elsewhere should be excluded from relief. Several local bar owners and restaurants have made a public spectacle of themselves by remaining open illegally and bragging about their lawlessness. This would be akin to a farmer being paid to not grow wheat, but doing so anyway. When the farmer's illegal crop is destroyed in a windstorm, we do not provide disaster relief for the loss of his crop.

what I can say is that, unfortunately we still have to live by the rules here because we don't want people to get sick and die. ... The truth is that if everybody will wear their masks, we can get our businesses back open again much quicker."

The statewide positivity rate decreased slightly to 5.6 percent Friday, as it is driven down by University of Illinois saliva tests that are not included in any of the regional data. The university contributed 8,581 of the state's tests but only 23 cases over the previous 24 hours, a one-day positivity rate of 0.27 percent.

### Covid Cases per 100,000 Per Day / Weekly Average Last Week According to *The New York Times*

UK	33
Argentina	32
United States	21
Columbia	17
Germany	13
Brazil	11
Russia	11
Sweden	10
Canada	7.2
Iran	7
Norway	4.7
Mexico	4.6
India	3.7
South Africa	2.8
Philippines	1.7
Japan	0.5
Cuba	0.4
New Zealand	0.2
South Korea	0.2
Australia	0.1
China	0
Vietnam	0

### Local

Winnebago County	62
Boone County	59
Cook County	34
Chicago	33
Los Angeles	16
New York City	7.1

Coronavirus	Flu	Allergies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fever</li> <li>Dry cough</li> <li>Shortness of breath</li> <li>Fatigue</li> <li>Chills</li> <li>Muscle pain</li> <li>Headache</li> <li>Sore throat</li> <li>New loss of taste or smell</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fever</li> <li>Cough</li> <li>Muscle aches</li> <li>Fatigue</li> <li>Headache</li> <li>Runny nose</li> <li>Sore throat</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sneezing</li> <li>Itchy eyes</li> <li>Runny nose</li> <li>Watery, red or swollen eyes</li> </ul>

## Charles Herbst

Attorney At Law

### Practice Areas:

- Wills and Trusts
- Tax Strategy
- IRS Representation
- Real Estate
- Wealth Planning
- LLCs and Corporate



### Education:

- LL.M. (Masters in Tax Law) New York University
- B.S. Business, J.D. Law (cum laude) Indiana University

### Experience:

- International Tax Associates, Director of Federal Tax Research
- Ernst and Young LLP, Manager; Writer, Washington National Tax Writing Center
- Private Practice in the local area for over 13 years
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# Community News & Events

**Trick or Treating Hours in the Village of Cherry Valley:** Trick-Or-Treating hours will be from 5:30-7:30 P.M. on Saturday October 31st. Please adhere to the following guidelines: Stay in groups of 10 or less from the same household, Face coverings must be worn by everyone over the age of two who can medically tolerate it (Including those handing out candy), Maintain social distancing from other groups, Carry hand sanitizer with you and use frequently, and most important, Stay home if you are sick.

**Illinois Tollway Announces 10th Annual Student Art Contest:** The 2021 Tollway Map Cover Art Contest rules and all required entry forms are posted on the Tollway's website at [www.Illinoistollway.com](http://www.Illinoistollway.com)

**Vacancies of the Boone County Volunteer Board:**

<u>Term Expires</u>	<u>Length of Term</u>
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Boone County Board of Review June 1, 2021	Remainder of Term
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Boone County Conservation District June 30, 2023	Remainder of Term
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Commissioners of the Housing Authority January 1, 2025	(5) Year Term
January 1, 2023	(5) Year Term

Fire Protection District #3 July 20, 2023	(3) Year Term
July 20, 2023	(3) Year Term

Regional Planning Commission December 31, 2020	Remainder of Term
December 31, 2021	Remainder of Term

Boone County Ethics Commission June 30, 2021	(1) Year Term
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Interested parties are asked to send a letter and/or resume expressing your interest and qualifications along with your contact information to Boone County Board Chairman Karl Johnson, Administration Campus, 1212 Logan Ave., Suite 102, Belvidere, IL 61008. Please respond by November 1, 2020 to assure being considered.

**C-SPAN'S 17th Annual Studentcam Video Competition:** Mediacom and C-SPAN announce the start of this year's annual student documentary competition and encourage middle school and high school students to participate in the video documentary competition known as "StudentCam." Students are asked to create a short video documentary and submit it online between November 1, 2020 and January 20, 2021.

This year, the new topic for 2021 submissions

is "Explore the issue you most want the president and new Congress to address in 2021." Students are asked to analyze the current and/or historical significance of their chosen issue and include differing points of view. Participants present their views by creating a short video documentary, five to six minutes in length. Students can work in teams or individually to create their videos.

Cash prizes of up to \$100,000 in total will be awarded to winning documentaries. Winners will be announced in March 2021 and the top-rated videos will be televised on C-SPAN in April 2021. Complete competition details and entry forms are available on the C-SPAN StudentCam website <http://www.studentcam.org>.

**Unveiling of The Women's Suffrage Centennial Sculpture:** Since August 2019, a subcommittee of the Women's Suffrage Centennial 2020 group led by Elaine Hirschenberger, Executive Director of Womanspace, has been working on a community-build sculpture to commemorate the 100th year anniversary of women achieving the right to vote on August 18, 1920.

The subcommittee created the concept for the sculpture and hired the lead artist, Susan Burton, to guide the project. The sculpture is a 15-foot mosaic tower that depicts the past, present and future of women's rights. Parts of the sculpture have been built by the community, including a group of high school students from the Rockford Area Arts Council's SPARK! Program.

The official unveiling of the tower will take place this Saturday, October 31st, at 11 am at the sculpture's permanent location on the Rock River adjacent to the Log Lodge at the Rockford YMCA.

**Rock Valley College and Rockford University Hosting a Virtual Career & Internship Fair:** Rock Valley College and Rockford University will be co-hosting a Virtual Career & Internship Fair on Monday, November 16, 2020 from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Participation in the Virtual Career & Internship Fair is a great way to connect, network, and possibly interview with representatives of employing organizations. To view current employer lists, job openings and to pre-register for the event visit [rockvalleycollege.edu/careerfair](http://rockvalleycollege.edu/careerfair)

For more information, please visit [rockvalleycollege.edu/careerfair](http://rockvalleycollege.edu/careerfair) or contact the Career Services Departments at Rock Valley College at (815) 921-4146 or Rockford University at (815) 226-4022.

**Community Building Complex Committee Regular Board Meeting:** Thursday November 19, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. in the Community Building Board Room.

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## Early Voting in Illinois Continues to Shatter Records

*U of I analyst cautions not to read too much into it*

by Peter Hancock Capitol News Illinois

Amid a new surge in COVID-19 cases, voters in Illinois and across the nation are shattering records for early voting.

As of Friday, according to the Illinois State Board of Elections, more than 1.8 million voters had already cast their ballots for the Nov. 3 general election. Nationally, the U.S. Elections Project at the University of Florida estimates that 50 million Americans have already voted.

In a normal election year, a large number of early votes would be seen as an indicator of high interest in the races and a predictor of overall high voter turnout.

But because of the pandemic, 2020 is turning out to be a year like no other, and one local analyst cautions observers not to read too much into the numbers – at least not yet.

"I'm willing to say I don't know what it means yet, and we're going to be looking closely at the final returns," Brian Gaines, a political science professor at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, said during an interview for a Capitol News Illinois podcast. "If I have to guess right now, I'd say, first of all, it was a success for

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– there was a deliberate effort to nudge people towards voting by mail, a little bit less to vote early, to reduce lines on Election Day.”

During the pandemic-shortened legislative session in May, Illinois lawmakers passed a bill requiring local election officials to send out mail ballot request forms to nearly every voter in Illinois. More than 2.3 million Illinois voters returned those forms, according to state election officials, and as of Friday, with 11 days remaining before the election, slightly more than 1 million, or 45 percent, had returned those ballots.

The new law, which applies to only the 2020 election, also allowed voting jurisdictions to provide secure drop boxes so voters could turn in their ballots personally rather than relying on the U.S. Postal Service to deliver them.

“So, the state took an intermediate path,” Gaines said. “Some states shifted to an all-mail election, joining the handful that already did that. And more typical was just to make it a little bit easier to vote by mail. Illinois was kind of in that category. We can still vote early, by mail (or) on Election Day in person.”

One of the questions on many people’s minds, Gaines said, is whether the people who are voting by mail or in person at early voting locations are people who otherwise wouldn’t have voted at all. He said he believes that’s unlikely and that the early votes will more likely result in fewer people voting in person on Election Day.

“But before I put all my chips in that hat and say it’s definitely not going to be a surge in turnout, it’s such a weird year that I think past precedent isn’t going to help us in lots of ways,” Gaines said. “So I think it’s mostly people who would have been voting on Election Day, they’re going early instead. But if it turns out in the end that the turnout really is up, then I’ll have to go back and eat those words and say, OK, it was actually more than that, it was getting in people who otherwise might not have voted.”

Gaines has published research on early voting – what some political scientists call “convenience voting” – and he said there are advantages and disadvantages to it.

The advantage, he said, is that it makes voting more accessible to many people, especially the elderly and disabled who would have a hard time getting to a polling place. But Illinois allows “no-excuse” early voting, meaning voters do not have to demonstrate they are unable to vote on Election Day or that they will be out of town. Any voter is allowed to ask for an advance ballot.

The big disadvantage, he said, is it makes someone’s vote less secret.

“A ballot that you cast wherever you want to cast it – it’s been mailed to you, you cast it at home, you cast it at work, sitting in Starbucks – can be secret if you choose to make it secret, but the inherent secrecy of the privacy of a booth is gone. And that’s led to a very noisy but not terribly factual debate about whether there’s a huge amount of fraud, tiny amount of fraud, no fraud whatsoever.”

Gaines said he is not one who believes that voting by mail is fraught with large amounts of fraud, and he said the chances of a mail-in ballot being rejected for technical reasons are slim.

According to information from the website Ballotpedia, the most common reason mail ballots get rejected is that they don’t arrive on time. Other common reasons include the voter failing to sign the envelope or the voter’s signature doesn’t match the signature on file in their voter registration records.

In Illinois, the new law requires that the each election jurisdiction create panels of three election judges consisting of no more than two from the same party to process vote-by-mail

ballots. That’s an increase from one election judge under previous laws.

A spokesperson for the Illinois State Board of Elections told Capitol News Illinois in an email earlier this month that election authorities keep track of party affiliation in their poll worker recruitment efforts in order to keep proper staffing at polling places and fulfill such requirements.

Per the new law, all three judges on the panel must reject a ballot for it not to be tabulated.

The judges handle every incoming mail ballot just as they hand out every ballot and check every signature at an early voting location or Election Day polling, the spokesperson said in the email.

In Illinois, according to the website, nearly 6,000 mail ballots, or 1.1 percent of the total, were rejected in the 2016 election. That rose to 2.2 percent in the 2018 election.

The full interview with Gaines is available on Capitol News Illinois’ podcast, Capitol Cast.

*Capitol News Illinois is a nonprofit, nonpartisan news service covering state government and distributed to more than 400 newspapers statewide. It is funded primarily by the Illinois Press Foundation and the Robert R. McCormick Foundation.*

## State to Fund Two Manufacturing Training Academies

*\$15 million available for downstate community colleges to build centers*

by Peter Hancock Capitol News Illinois

The state of Illinois plans to invest \$15 million to construct two new manufacturing training academies at downstate community colleges.

Gov. JB Pritzker made that announcement Tuesday in Champaign at an event highlighting the state’s manufacturing industry.

“Manufacturing is as much our future as it has been of our past. It’s a leading driver in our economy with more than \$100 billion of annual economic output,” Pritzker said, adding that items manufactured in Illinois can be found in over 200 countries worldwide.

Funding for the new training academies will come through the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, which issued a notice of funding opportunity on Tuesday. The agency is seeking proposals from community colleges to provide cutting-edge training programs that will equip students for an array of high-paying skilled manufacturing jobs that require specialized training.

Pritzker and DCEO Director Erin Guthrie made the announcement at the Eden Park Illumination factory in Champaign, a company that manufactures UV lighting systems that are used in a variety of industries. The company evolved out of research by two University of

Illinois engineering professors.

Guthrie noted that Eden Park has grown rapidly in recent months, creating a large number of new jobs in the Champaign area.

“However, they need help with the hiring to fill the demand they have both for their customers and as they make product advancements and innovate,” she said. “The same is true for many of other Illinois companies that we’ve heard from. The need for skilled manufacturers is a big one and it weighs heavily on them as they plan for the future.”

Despite the decline of manufacturing nationally, Guthrie said it is still the largest contributor to the state’s economy, employing more than 500,000 workers and accounting for \$60 billion in exports annually.

But David Boulay, president and CEO of the Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center, said rapidly changing technology in the industry is making it challenging for manufacturers to find the skilled labor they need.

“Worker skills really are expiring like never before,” he said. “Automation, artificial intelligence, collaborative robots are creating massive change in the workplace. And even during this pandemic, we are seeing the signs of that massive change accelerated.”

Applications for the grants will be accepted from community college districts or coalitions of community college districts outside of Cook County and the surrounding collar counties.

“As Illinois’ largest workforce training provider, community colleges statewide have the expertise to partner with local communities to help guide our residents on the path to meaningful careers through these new facilities,” Brian Durham, executive director of the Illinois Community College Board, said in a news release. “Manufacturing remains an important and growing industry for our state, and we are poised, with the right investments, to ensure more Illinoisans get the opportunities they need to train for these 21st century jobs.”

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Subscribed and sworn (or affirmed) to before me, this 8th day of October, A.D. 2020

Julie Stapler, County Clerk

Published in Boone County Journal October 16, 23, 30

## Lawmakers Push to Reform State's Bail System

*Advocates work to end money bond but some in law enforcement push back*

by Raymon Troncoso

Capitol News Illinois | Report For America

Some state lawmakers are looking to reform the cash bail system in Illinois, mainly by ending the use of money bonds as a factor in preventing a suspect's release.

State Sen. Robert Peters and state Rep. Justin Slaughter, both Chicago Democrats, will attempt to end the use of money bonds by sponsoring a forthcoming, yet-to-be-filed bill known as the Pretrial Fairness Act.

In our 25th year publishing *The Boone County Journal* October 23, 2020 7

In January, Gov. JB Pritzker put ending cash bail at the top of his administration's criminal justice agenda for the year.

Bail is a set of conditions that can be set by the court that must be met in order for a suspect to be released from custody before or after a conviction.

In Illinois, if a monetary bail is set, an individual in custody must pay 10 percent of the dollar amount set as a bond in order to be released. The state holds on to that 10 percent as collateral to encourage the defendant to return for their set court date. Failure to return on the set court date results in more legal penalties in addition to being responsible for paying the entire monetary bail set by the courts.

If the detainee cannot afford to pay that 10 percent bond, then they remain in custody until their trial date.

The majority of prisoners in Illinois are pretrial detainees, meaning they are imprisoned for crimes for which they have not been convicted. In the case of violent offenders, or detainees the courts determine pose a danger to the community, bail is denied entirely. But for many Illinoisans caught in the justice system, being stuck behind bars despite being presumed innocent is the cost of economic disparity and being unable to post bond for release.

"I don't know if there's a more obvious indicator that our society has a major issue with systemic injustices than the fact that a lack of pretrial fairness results in people staying locked up simply because they are poor," Peters said in a news release. "There are many, many steps along the road toward winning real safety and justice, but the first is to abolish cash bail so that the rich don't have a major advantage in our deeply flawed justice system."

Peters said he is considering filing the bill for the upcoming fall veto session, but if he doesn't think it has the necessary support to pass during the six-day session scheduled for Nov. 17-19 and Dec. 1-3, he would reintroduce it in 2021 during the regular session with a new General Assembly.

On Tuesday, the Senate Criminal Law Committee and the Special Committee on Public Safety held a joint hearing, which Peters co-chaired, that brought in advocates, experts and detractors to testify regarding the proposition of ending cash bail.

The Coalition To End Money Bond, which has been lobbying for bail reform since 2016, partnered with Peters on multiple town halls and promotional materials to explain the Pretrial Fairness Act and garner support for its passage. Malik Alim served as one of the Coalition's witnesses at the hearing.

"[Money bail] disproportionately affects Black communities," Alim said. "A study from the University of California suggests that Black and brown people are more likely to be ordered to pay higher money bonds and given the real existence of the racial wealth gap those same people are less likely to bond out."

That 2017 UCLA study found that in Los

Angeles specifically, between 2012 and 2016, Black and Latina women disproportionately bore the financial cost of paying for bond. Of nearly \$200 million paid for bail bonds over that period, \$92.1 million was paid for by Latinos, \$40.7 million by African Americans, and \$37.9 million by white residents.

These numbers don't translate directly to Illinois. Black Illinoisans, however, make up half of all jailed detainees, and about 60 percent of prison detainees, despite making up about 15 percent of the state's population. According to the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, about 90 percent of jailed individuals are pretrial detainees.

Witnesses from the coalition told lawmakers that the current system is wealth-based incarceration, and that a purely risk-based system would be more appropriate where only detainees determined to be potential risks can be held before their trial.

Wayne County Sheriff Mike Everett, testifying on behalf of the Illinois Sheriffs Association, provided an overview of concerns he said the Sheriffs Association and other law enforcement bodies had about ending cash bail. On the financial side, Everett said, falling budgets for agencies involved in the criminal justice system, unfunded mandates tied to imposed reforms, and a general loss of revenue for courts, law enforcement and victim services were all issues related to ending cash bail.

Everett likened cash bail to taxes, paying for a permit or applying for a license in that the cost of those actions and penalties help fund and sustain the system in charge of them.

"I'm not here to tell you we believe that the system should create financial constraints that are unachievable for people," Everett said. "But we do believe that there needs to be some form of accountability and we would argue a financial system helps support that accountability."

Everett also said that without cash bail, it could lead to more suspects missing their set court date and make Illinois communities less safe.

Marcia Meis, director of the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts, cited the Illinois Supreme Court's commission on pretrial practices during her testimony at the hearing. That commission published its final report in April, which offered 54 recommendations for reforming the pretrial system to remove inequities and improve outcomes, as the current system is often discriminatory and does not follow the intent of the policies behind it.

Meis said the commission found the Illinois Supreme Court and the Illinois General Assembly "should implement rules and statutes to reflect the evolving goals of pretrial justice and resolve internal conflicts within the statutes that are inconsistent with the presumption that conditions of release will be non-monetary, least restrictive, and considerate of the financial ability of the accused."

According to the testimony of Judge Robbin Stuckert, who chaired the pretrial practices commission, while the commission did not come to an agreement on whether or not to end cash bail, it's clear the pretrial justice system in Illinois needs an overhaul.

"Establishing a robust and effective pretrial system in Illinois is the first and most crucial step towards minimizing and eventually eliminating cash bail," she said. "However, simply eliminating cash bail at the outset without first implementing meaningful reforms and dedicating adequate resources to allow evidence-based risk assessment and supervision would be premature."


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# Legislators Discuss Statewide Police Reforms

*Lawmakers consider tying funding to compliance*

By **RAYMON TRONCOSO**  
*Capitol News Illinois | Report For America*

In the wake of a police shooting that left one teenager dead and a woman injured last week in Waukegan, lawmakers met in a joint hearing of the Senate Criminal Law Committee and Senate Special Committee on Public Safety Tuesday to discuss statewide reforms for law enforcement.

Lawmakers and witnesses discussed body cameras, mandatory data collection, increased transparency around police shootings, residency requirements for officers and changes to how allegations of police misconduct are handled. Public defenders, state's attorneys, municipal officials and law enforcement all gave testimony.

"We must address the procedures and policies that perpetuate the inequality and injustice that Black communities face," state Rep. Justin Slaughter, D-Chicago, a guest speaker at the committee hearing, said. "Holding law enforcement officers to a higher standard and examining ways to increase transparency and accountability will undoubtedly help protect our families and pave the way for a more just future."

Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle testified that change at the state level is required to enact lasting police reform, citing barriers of authority to municipal governments that have tried to implement changes regarding law enforcement.

"At the local level, police reforms have been limited at best," Preckwinkle said. "The Chicago Police Department, for example, has either delayed implementation, or just refused implementation of the reforms."

"We believe that the authority to mandate implementation should not be dependent on the will of the police department, but rather, certain reforms should be codified at the state with funding tied to police departments' compliance," she added.

Amy Campanelli, who serves as the Public Defender of Cook County, testified that despite body cameras already being mandated by the Chicago Police Department, her office has dealt with several recent cases where officers "blatantly violate their body worn camera policy."

Campanelli called for the General Assembly to pass House Bill 2111 which would make it a felony for a member of law enforcement to turn off, or fail to turn on, their body camera. Preckwinkle and the ACLU also supported the bill in written testimony.

According to Campanelli, cases that involve body camera footage move through the legal system quicker thanks to an objective third-party view being available to prosecutors, judges and defense attorneys.

"Body cameras and, more specifically, policies that require their constant use and that allow officers to be punished for violating them is the easiest and most effective way to ensure a greater sense of police accountability," state Sen. Robert Peters, D-Chicago, said. "The era of 'their word versus mine' must come to an end. There must be a publicly available, unbiased record of

any incidents that occur so that justice can be delivered and so that safety can be prioritized above all else."

Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police Director Ed Wojcicki and Elgin Police Chief Ana Lalley supported the claim that body cameras help law enforcement and the justice system solve cases swiftly and accurately.

Wojcicki testified to lawmakers that officers wearing body cameras were less likely to be the subject of misconduct claims, and departments with body camera mandates received fewer complaints compared to those without.

"A person might say something, and they go in and the video and they figure out well, nothing much really happened there," he said. "It's anecdotal at this point but it does seem to have a certain calming effect."

According to Wojcicki, as of 2019, only 75 of around 900 law enforcement agencies in Illinois use body cameras. Despite widespread support from law enforcement regarding the use of body cameras, Wojcicki said their prohibitive cost prevents more departments from implementing them.

Lalley said Elgin's transition to body cameras in 2015 was possible due to a \$500,000 federal grant the department received. According to Lalley, the city pays over \$170,000 annually to store body worn camera footage. She estimated mid-sized cities with 200 to 300 officers would have to pay close to \$200,000 a year to deal with video storage.

"The cost of implementing a program can be a significant barrier for some law enforcement agencies," she said.

The Association of Chiefs of Police submitted written testimony to the senate committees containing recommendations for making body camera usage more widespread, as less than 10 percent of the state's law enforcement agencies are utilizing the technology. Most were measures to reduce the costs of video storage and administrative duties.

"Eliminate most of the redaction requirements," the Association wrote in its testimony. "This is time consuming and expensive, and any citizen with a smartphone can video the same event and share it via social media without any redactions."

The recommendations also called for deletion of accidental recordings, reporting standards to be relaxed, and for more monetary assistance from the state and federal government to fund body camera programs.

On accountability, multiple witnesses, including retired law enforcement officials, testified on the need for deep reforms to be made both statewide and nationally.

In written testimony submitted to lawmakers, the Law Enforcement Action Partnership, a collective of mostly retired law enforcement professionals from across the country, called for strong civilian oversight of policing and mandated changes to how departments handle misconduct.

"We cannot uphold public safety without earning community trust. Without trust, people do not report crimes, and witnesses refuse to talk to us," the Partnership testimony stated. "Holding ourselves to a higher standard is the best way to honor our profession."

Dave Franco, a retired Chicago police officer and member of the Partnership, described a toxic culture in the department where politics

influenced career trajectory and officers were encouraged to not report misconduct of fellow officers or intervene when excessive force was being used.

Recommendations to the General Assembly from the Partnership, the ACLU and Cook County officials all called for codified state laws that provide enhanced and expanded whistleblower protections and mandate that officers must intervene when witnessing excessive force.

Those three written testimonies also suggested independent civilian oversight of every department, permanent statewide records of disciplinary and complaint records against officers, and restrictions on the limited liability – also referred to as "qualified immunity" – given to officers in the line of duty that provides legal protection to some forms of alleged misconduct.

"We must have a system that is more just and equitable for both communities and police," Sen. Elgie Sims, a Chicago Democrat who chaired the committee, said.

According to Franco, officers across the country can only benefit from these changes, as deteriorating trust in law enforcement due to lack of accountability and widespread misconduct puts officers' lives in danger. Franco told lawmakers that with buy-in from leadership and a commitment from political leaders to institute reform, rank and file police officers "that work hard every day and love their jobs" would adapt to a new model of policing that enhances community safety and fosters more trust in law enforcement.

"I know that they are equal to the test. And with the proper leadership and guidance, we'll accept that challenge," Franco said.

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