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## Small Town In a Big World

By David Larson

There was a day, not many decades ago, when residents of a town or a city defined their municipality by the main street—by their “State Street”—that spread through the downtown neighborhood. The street was often named Main Street or State Street. Because of the unique collection of business establishments, the configuration of the streets, the alignment of vendors, and side streets, many downtown neighborhoods were identified as the core of the city’s commercial and cultural activity. Such was and remains the case for Belvidere, despite being in a post-proprietorship economy. A few years ago, in an effort to revitalize the downtown neighborhood, the Belvidere City Council created a downtown historic district overlay that included the downtown neighborhood from South State Street through the old urban downtown to just north of the State Street Bridge.

The photograph above shows South State Street where even today Logan Avenue intersects with South State Street. It is where the old Belvidere Bank Building was located and, before that, where the JC Penney and Planes Hardware Stores were found. The downtown neighborhood has changed many times since Belvidere was founded. What

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*Belvidere’s central business district*

## Lawmakers Moving Forward on Public Defender Reform

*Bill in the Illinois Senate would create a statewide public defender’s office*

By Ben Szalinski Capitol News Illinois

When Elisabeth Pollock took over as the Champaign County public defender in 2022, one of her team’s attorneys was handling 500 cases by herself in a courtroom that should have been staffed by at least three public defenders.

“That is a recipe for disaster because it’s not just taxing on the attorney, but it means that the client(s) who that attorney is representing are not able to speak with her in a timely fashion; they’re not able to review their cases with her in a timely fashion,” Pollock said in an interview. “We’re talking about months of delay in terms of meeting with attorneys and getting results.”

With many county public defender offices pushed to the limits throughout Illinois, state lawmakers are moving forward on legislation to create a statewide public defender office.

Many public defender offices in Illinois, especially in rural areas, are in desperate need of resources to provide adequate defense services. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 1963 on *Gideon v. Wainwright* that anyone accused of a crime has

*Continued on page 4*

## Pared-Back ‘Right to Play’ Bill Advances In General Assembly, Awaits Senate Action

*Amended bill would give high school athletes limited right to compete in outside events*

By Peter Hancock Capitol News Illinois

The Illinois House gave its approval to legislation that would give high school athletes a limited right to compete in non-school events or on non-school teams during the same season in which they play for their school.

The House voted 68-39 on April 9 to pass a scaled-back version of a bill known as the Right to Play Act. It would partially override an existing rule of the Illinois High School Association that says students who participate on a school team may not also participate on a non-school team or compete in outside tournaments or events in the same sport during the same season, unless they obtain permission from both their school and IHSA.

The association currently allows students to obtain as many as three waivers in a season to compete in outside contests or tournaments if those events are sanctioned by the sport’s national governing body.

Rep. Janet Yang-Rohr Janet Yang Rohr, D-Naperville, said she thinks that rule is too restrictive because it doesn’t allow for events sponsored by international sports organizations.

“Our athletes right now in Illinois have to decline invitations from FIFA (the international soccer governing body), from the Olympic development program, from offers to play with

*Continued on page 4*

## Illinois Sen. Dick Durbin To Retire After More Than 4 Decades In Congress

*Announcement expected to set off flurry of political moves among Illinois Democrats*

By Ben Szalinski Capitol News Illinois

Longtime Illinois Sen. Dick Durbin, the No. 2 Democrat in the U.S. Senate, announced he will retire after his term ends in January 2027.

“I truly love the job of being United State Senator, but in my heart, I know it’s time to pass the torch,” Durbin said in a social media video.

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## Social Security Rescinding Its Plan To End Phone-Based Filing Called A Win For Illinois Seniors

*AARP urges Illinois lawmakers to enact policies to strengthen Social Security services*

By Isabella Schoonover  
Medill Illinois News Bureau

The Illinois chapter of AARP played a role in the Trump administration reversing itself and allowing Social Security beneficiaries to have the option of filing for benefits over the phone.

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# Illinois Scrambles To Boost Locally Produced Farm Products After Trump's Funding Freeze

*Legislators seek to bolster local farms by purchasing their wares with state dollars*

By Simon Carr

Medill Illinois News Bureau

Capitol Illinois News Bureau

When Illinois named small farmer Nathan Ryder a finalist for a federal \$100,000 Local Food Infrastructure Grant, he made big plans for his farm in the southeastern tip of the state. Then the U.S. Department of Agriculture cut his funding.

The Ryder family farm, a 10-acre operation in Pope County that produces chicken eggs, sheep and some fruits and vegetables, would have used the money to purchase a refrigerated truck. Ryder said he wanted to use the truck to sell his own products farther away. He was also going to transport other farmers' food back to Southern Illinois, expanding that rural region's access to healthy, affordable food.

"Why is it that [people's access to fresh fruits and vegetables] is somehow considered optional?"



## OBITUARIES

- Rebecca Conkling, 76, Belvidere, April 20
- Donald Hawkins, 77, Belvidere, April 16
- Constance Kramer, 81, Cherry Valley, April 17
- Anthony Laye, 63, Cherry Valley, April 12
- Gary McConnell, 66, Belvidere, April 19
- Andrew Niziolek, 72, Marengo, April 10
- Michael Roby, 35, Belvidere, April 17
- Shirley Wykle, 89, Belvidere, April 14

- Gene Hackman, 95, Santa Fe, NM, Feb 18
- Pope Francis, 88, Vatican City, April 21
- Quincy Jones, 91, Los Angeles, Nov 3, 2024

Ryder asked in an interview. "We should be able to feed the people around us."

Illinois was approved for \$43 million in federal reimbursement funds for two food programs designed to strengthen statewide food systems, but when the Trump administration took office it informed the state, without explanation, that the remaining \$17.8 million in federal agriculture reimbursements still owed to Illinois would cease after Jan. 19, 2025.

Farmers like Ryder have asked the state to consider new models for subsidizing, planning and regulating agriculture to help them keep Illinoisans fed. Illinois lawmakers are trying to help by pushing two bills through the legislature.

The first, HB 3701, would reallocate state funds to purchase farm food locally.

The second, HB 2196, would help poultry farmers sell more of their products directly to consumers.

Both the Illinois General Assembly and Gov. JB Pritzker have shown some reluctance to spend state money on this issue, citing budgetary concerns. But the two bills that soared through the House Agriculture Committee recently both demonstrated dedication to supporting local farmers amid turbulent changes in the federal government.

The first bill, the Good Food Purchasing Law (GFPL), proposed by Rep. Sonya Harper, D-Chicago, would reestablish the Good Food Purchasing Policy Task Force with a new mandate to find between one and three Illinois-run institutions (public colleges, for example) that would begin purchasing from small local farmers like Ryder. Currently such institutions are fiscally obligated to purchase food from the lowest bidder, often larger companies in places outside Illinois that have more agriculture capacity.

"I represent communities on the South Side of Chicago, where healthy access to food has never been guaranteed," Harper said at a press conference in Springfield earlier this month. "And so this bill addresses issues that I've seen firsthand in my district."

Currently 3 million Illinoisans, roughly 1-in-4, live in food deserts, defined by the USDA as areas with little access to healthy food.

If the bill passes, Illinois would be the first state in the country to promote purchasing locally sourced ethical food within its own state departments. Such programs already exist in 72 institutions across 26 cities, funded through a combination of local and federal dollars, including in Cook County since 2017.

The Good Food Purchasing Law that made it past the House Agriculture Committee is a watered-down version of a more-significant bill that would have required some state agencies to immediately start purchasing local, ethically sourced food. That version was opposed by a number of state departments, including the Department of Agriculture and Department of Corrections.

The House Agriculture Committee voted in favor of the stronger GFPL bill 6-3 on March 18th, along partisan lines, with Republican lawmakers opposing it. The amended version passed unanimously in committee last week on April 8.

However, last week the bill was sent back to the Rules Committee, because it was growing late in this legislative session to push it through. In the bill's place, Harper put forward HJR 0027, a nonbinding resolution that calls for Illinois departments to implement this measure as soon as practicable. The resolution calls for recreating the Good Food Purchasing Policy Task Force

and urges, but does not require, state agencies to investigate their potential for a good food purchasing pilot program.

The other bill deals with poultry. In addition to expanding local farmers' industry by reallocating state funds to purchase local farm food, legislators hope to loosen rules on self-processed poultry in order to help local farmers sell more of their products directly to consumers. The House Agriculture Committee on April 8 also unanimously passed this second bill, an amendment to the Meat and Poultry Inspection Act (HB 2196), sponsored by Rep. Charles Meier, R-Okawville.

Should the bill become law, self-processed chicken would be available at local farmers markets, both decreasing Illinoisans' reliance on large chicken growers and opening more of an industry for local farmers.

This bill also raises the annual cap for on-farm poultry processing from 5,000 head to 7,500 head. Most of Illinois' neighboring states have higher limits, and 40 states have caps of 20,000.

Illinois currently has only four poultry processing facilities, according to farmer Ed Dubrick of DuChick Ranch in Cissna Park in Iroquois County. As locally grown meat grows more popular, Dubrick has to book very far in advance to get processing time slots, which means he's often not selling his product at its best. Further, the hours-long drives to processing plants can be hard on the animals, says Dubrick.

Larger companies that can afford their own processing facilities don't face the same burden.

For niche poultry products like quail, Illinois has no poultry processors at all, Dubrick said. Some farmers must drive to the East Coast to process their product, a risky trip for the quails and a financial burden for small farmers, who often benefit from selling niche products.

Harper raised a concern during the Agriculture Committee meeting that it might be best to hold off on loosening poultry regulations until after the current bird flu outbreak subsides. But witnesses testified that they believe this bill wouldn't increase the risk of flu spreading, and Harper has since been supportive.


The poultry bill passed through the House earlier this month without opposition.

Both HB 3701 and HJR 0027 are still under review by the Pritzker administration, which has yet to take a position on either, according to a statement from the governor's press secretary, Alex Gough.

HB 3701 still needs to make it through the Senate, where it's currently waiting to be assigned to a committee for review.

Simon Carr is a student in journalism with Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism, Media, Integrated Marketing Communications, and a fellow in its Medill Illinois News Bureau working in partnership with Capitol News Illinois.

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<b>Senior Writer/Editorial</b>	Charles Herbst
<b>Advertising</b>	Bethany Staniec
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[www.boonecountyjournal.com](http://www.boonecountyjournal.com)  
[news@boonecountyjournal.com](mailto:news@boonecountyjournal.com)

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# Foster Demands Trump Comply with Supreme Court

Press Release

Congressman Bill Foster (D-IL) joined 141 of his colleagues in sending a letter to President Trump regarding Kilmar Abrego Garcia, a legal U.S. resident who was wrongfully detained and deported to El Salvador last month. In the letter, the Members requested an immediate update on the administration's plans to ensure Mr. Abrego Garcia's safe return to the United States.

"The Supreme Court ordered the Trump Administration to facilitate Mr. Abrego Garcia's return, yet we have seen no meaningful action or heard of any plans indicating their effort to comply. Mr. Abrego Garcia is a legal resident of the United States, and he is entitled to due process under the law," said Foster. "The administration's failure to correct this unlawful deportation is both morally indefensible and an overstep of their authority. The administration must act immediately to bring him home and ensure this never happens again."

The letter reads:

Dear President Trump:

We write to you with grave concern about Kilmar Abrego Garcia of Beltsville, Maryland, who was wrongfully detained and deported to El Salvador last month. We respectfully request an immediate update on his wellbeing and detailed plans on how all relevant executive agencies plan to ensure his safe return to the United States.

As you know, on March 12, 2025, Mr. Abrego Garcia was arrested by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) with his 5-year-old son in the backseat of his car. Mr. Abrego Garcia was then deported, along with alleged Venezuelan and Salvadoran gang members, to El Salvador. It is our understanding that he is currently being held in the Terrorism Confinement Center in El Salvador.

While Mr. Abrego Garcia is a citizen of El Salvador, he had legally been granted withholding of removal in 2019 by a United States immigration court based on his fear of persecution by gangs in El Salvador. He has no criminal record and has been residing in Maryland with his U.S. citizen wife and family.

Your administration has admitted that Mr. Abrego Garcia's removal was an "administrative error." As such, the Supreme Court of the United States ordered, in a unanimous ruling, that your administration must "facilitate" Mr. Abrego Garcia's "release from custody in El Salvador and to ensure that his case is handled as it would have been had he not been improperly sent to El Salvador." This would mean his return to the United States. Despite these clear instructions, the federal district court judge overseeing Mr. Abrego Garcia's case has indicated your administration has made no effort to comply with the Supreme Court's order.

As President, you have the authority to get Mr. Abrego Garcia back to the U.S. from El Salvador despite your administration's insistence otherwise. If there is evidence of any wrongdoing by Mr. Abrego Garcia, he is entitled to a chance to contest such allegations. Mistakenly removing a U.S. resident that has protection from deportation legally granted to him by an immigration court and then making no effort to get him back not only places Mr. Abrego Garcia's life in danger, but also violates the basic principles of due process and the rule of law.

The U.S. government must comply with the

Supreme Court's ruling and do everything in its power to get Mr. Abrego Garcia back to his family in the United States as quickly as possible. We appreciate your urgent attention to this matter and we look forward to receiving your response.

## Citing Growing List Of Duties, Illinois' Raoul Seeks a \$15m Increase in AG Budget

Attorney General engaged in growing volume of suits against Trump administration

By Peter Hancock Capitol News Illinois

Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul is asking state lawmakers for a \$15 million increase in his General Revenue Fund budget for the upcoming year, saying his office needs a more "stable" system of funding as it takes on greater responsibilities, including the growing volume of litigation against the Trump administration.

In appearances before House and Senate budget committees in recent days, Raoul said the funding method that has traditionally been used for his office — one that relied heavily on fees and settlements generated by cases the office was involved in — no longer is sufficient to sustain its operations.

"This funding structure has evolved over the years as progressive court reforms have made fines and fees a less stable source of funding," he told the House appropriations committee that oversees his office's budget. "Also, proceeds from settlements or lawsuit damages are unreliable from year to year."

In Fiscal Year 2019, the year Raoul took office, the attorney general's budget totaled \$87.7 million, according to state budget records. That included \$32.2 million in general revenue funds and \$54.5 million in "other state funds," such as fees and settlements. Another \$1 million came from federal funds.

Since then, the attorney general's office has more than doubled. For the current fiscal year, the total budget stands at more than \$193.7 million, including \$105.5 million in general revenue funds and \$74.9 million in "other state funds." Federal funds are projected at \$13.5 million.

Raoul's proposed increase would bring next year's general revenue fund budget to more than \$120 million.

Since 2019, Raoul said, his office's responsibilities have grown substantially. He said the General Assembly has passed 101 new laws — including some at Raoul's own request — that either have added new duties or expanded existing duties of the office while his office has also been busy defending other laws

passed by the General Assembly against legal challenges.

"The Attorney General's Office is the sole enforcement agency for violations of the Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act and parts of the SAFE-T Act," he told the House panel. "Our office is working diligently to defend both new and long-standing laws against constitutional challenges. Each of these cases require significant resources, including costs associated with our attorneys, travel to courts across the state, lengthy discovery processes, as well as expert witness retention."

In addition to those challenges, however, Raoul has taken on additional legal work in recent months challenging actions of President Donald Trump's administration.

Since Trump was sworn into office for a second term on Jan. 20, Raoul has joined in filing 11 federal lawsuits challenging administration actions and has filed another 14 amicus briefs in support of other legal challenges. It is also defending the state against two lawsuits that the Trump administration has filed against Illinois.

"This budget will support supplying the requisite attorneys to step up where the federal government is stepping away, as well as attorneys involved in critical cases to protect our state's interests," Raoul said.

Raoul's office would not provide specific information about the number of attorneys or other staff it would hire with the additional money. A spokesperson in his office told Capitol News Illinois in an email that the money would allow the office "to hire additional attorneys to perform our growing statutorily-required

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## Small Town

from page 1

will it look like in 100 years?

The posts in the photograph were added in the 1880s, and relatively new to the city when this photograph was shot. Those posts were used for the telephone and electrical lines that powered electric lights and the downtown trolley line. The Belvidere Electric Line that connected Rockford with Belvidere and points east tracts are visible and constructed around brick paving. As cars became more common (and horses and their droppings less so), Belvidere's main street was paved in the 1920s. A careful look at the street shows the rail lines curving to the left and following deeper into the photograph along South State Street. The trolley ran through Downtown Belvidere from South State Street to North State Street, across the Kishwaukee River and west to Rockford. It also followed Logan Avenue, with a final destination in Elgin, where a cross-rail depot transfer provided rail transportation to Chicago, the rail hub of the nation.

The day this photograph was taken looks like a spring or fall day. There is an automobile, a sedan with the top down, parked along the street to the left. By the looks of the automobile, we can speculate that the date of the photo may have been in the late 1910s or early 1920s. Those earlier cars with fold-down tops were not called "convertibles," the word had not then been created. The motor vehicle bore a license plate that separated it from a carriage, which did not, and there were a number of automobiles parked along State Street. To the right is parked another automobile, a coupe, and to some in Belvidere at the time, those modes of transportation were not automobiles, they were cursed as the "horseless carriages."

Some living in Belvidere in those days rejected the idea of riding in one of those automotive contraptions. They would bite off the words as if they were gnawing on a plug of tobacco. They would growl, "I'm not riding in one of those horseless carriages if my life depends upon it." We see similar responses today to the changes around us, including electric vehicles. Some of those that did growl such declarative thoughts might have ridden in a carriage similar to the one belonging to the man in the foreground of the photograph.

By 1920, Belvidere had already begun to settle in as a firmly established community and less a stopping post on the way west to the promise of a better life. It had been over 50 years since the Civil War, and World War I had just concluded. The radio was becoming common, which allowed for a unified national voice with a new patriotic message quite different than that of the Civil War. Local and regional newspapers flourished during the Civil War and into the 20th Century, and each expressed their own perspective on a subject. ABC, CBS, and NBC were the new brands on the frontier of mass communication. It was a time when the country was becoming a military player on the world scene. Sectionalism fell to the wayside and a new sense of nationalism had found a new voice. The radio was its messenger.

## Public Defender

from page 1

a right to a defense attorney, setting the basis for public defenders that judges often assign to defendants to represent a person for free.

A 2021 report commissioned by the Illinois Supreme Court examined nine counties of varying sizes and found each one lacked necessary resources to provide defendants proper legal representation because of high caseloads, a lack of state oversight and long wait times to obtain a lawyer. A task force created after that report recommended Illinois fully fund public defense services and establish a statewide office that provides administrative oversight and resources.

Demand for public defense attorneys has increased in the two years since the Pretrial Fairness Act took effect in 2023. That law requires more in-depth evidence and arguments during first appearance hearings than under the old bond system, where first appearance hearings often lasted just a few minutes while a judge set a bond. Now detention hearings are required to take place within 72 hours of an arrest, meaning public defender services are often needed right away to review early evidence in cases.

Legislation in front of the General Assembly would create the "Office of State Public Defender" which would primarily be responsible for providing public defender offices around the state with more resources. House Bill 3363 passed the House last week on a 72-41 vote. It now heads to the Senate where President Don Harmon, D-Oak Park, has tried to pass similar legislation in recent years.

Illinois has already established similar offices to improve other aspects of criminal court processes, including the Office of State Appellate Defender and the Office of Statewide Pretrial Services.

First steps for the office

If lawmakers approve the bill, the office may provide public defense services — but not for several years. Over the first few years, the office's primary responsibility would be to assess the needs of public defenders in Illinois and collect data about their workloads.

"We are really lacking any type of data gathering across public defender offices in the state of Illinois because we just have never had the resources to really even count the number of cases that we have," Pollock said.

The data gathered would guide decision making about where the money should be spent and what types of resources — from more attorneys to case investigators — public defender offices should receive.

The state has appropriated \$10 million for public defense services via a fund established in 2023. State funding would provide greater equity for public defenders throughout the state, which typically receive funding from their counties, Pollock said.

"County by county, the budget depends on what that county can provide, and some counties don't have as much revenue as others and so they

just simply cannot afford to provide the resources that the public defenders need to do their jobs," she said.

Limited data shows all Illinois counties need more public defenders. According to an analysis of county public defender budgets compiled by Northwestern University, no Illinois counties have "sufficient" staffing in public defender offices.

Some positions in public defender offices aren't filled at all, including 83% of counties that don't have any investigators in public defender offices, according to researchers.

Most other states also have some level of state oversight and are the primary funding source for public defenders. Illinois doesn't fall into either category.

The bill would require counties to bump up salaries for public defenders from 90% to 95% of a state's attorney's salary, something proponents say will help improve recruitment and retention.

### Appointing public defenders

Another key provision of the bill would change how public defenders are selected. Outside of Cook County, top county judges appoint or remove public defenders. Under the bill, a local nominating committee would be tasked with appointing or removing public defenders, which is designed to give the public defenders more independence from the judiciary.

"You're now arguing in front of a judge who hires you and a judge who fires you, potentially. Whereas a state's attorney is an elected official and a judge has no power over him or her and no power over their budget," bill sponsor Rep. Dave Vella, D-Rockford, said in an interview.

Chief judges could still be part of the local committees appointing public defenders, however. But their voice would be one of between four and six members of the commission that selects a county's public defender. Other local commission members would include attorneys, representatives of law schools or legal professional organizations and former public defender clients.

For now, that process would not be required for counties with fewer than 35,000 people as those counties typically rely on contract attorneys for public defense that split their time in multiple counties. State law currently doesn't require those smaller counties, which account for more than half of the state's 102 counties, to have public defender offices. Cook County already has its own appointment process different from the rest of the state.

"The problem is the appearance of impropriety," Vella said. "We have a system right now in Illinois and in America where defendants and people who are in the system are starting to have some real questions about the fairness of the system."

Pollock explained it makes sense that judges are part of the process because they see the attorneys perform in the courtroom and might be able to tell who would make a good public defender. But the problem is it could create an appearance for defendants that their public defender might

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**Public Defender***from page 4*

change how they represent someone to make their “boss” — the chief judge — happy.

Former Madison County Public Defender John Rekowski disagreed.

“The judges are in the best position to know the local landscape and know the local bench, know the local climate and pick the person who should furnish those services,” Rekowski said in an interview.

Rekowski and the Illinois State Bar Association are proposing that judges continue appointing the public defender, but the commission has the power to remove the public defender or reappoint the public defender to a new term. Rekowski said limiting the judge’s power over public defenders to just their first appointment removes “any possibility (of) some kind of retribution or intimidation.”

The bill is likely to go through more changes as it heads to the Senate for consideration.

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**Bill***from page 1*

national teams in Canada and Scotland, because these IHSA rules compel the organization to deny their waiver requests,” she said on the House floor. “This legislation will finally be able to let those student athletes participate in those events too.”

Under the amended bill, student athletes would be able to obtain waivers for as many as two outside events per year, including “all-star team” events. But they would only need the agreement of their school’s principal or athletics director, not IHSA. The bill also would not require the events to be sanctioned by any official governing body.

That is significantly more restrictive than the original bill, which would have removed the prohibition on simultaneous participation almost entirely. It would have prohibited participating in both a school competition or practice and a non-school activity on the same day.

That proposal passed out of the House Education Policy Committee in March, despite warnings from some critics that allowing unrestricted dual participation could endanger the health and safety of the athletes while also setting up the possibility of conflict between a school coach and non-school coach.

But Rep. Martin McLaughlin, R-Barrington Hills, who voted for the amended bill, said during floor debate that he would have preferred going even further in limiting the authority of IHSA.

“This is an unfortunate turn with your amendments, but I completely appreciate ... what you had to do to get this started,” he said during floor debate. “But frankly, let’s next year – and I’ll join you – get this completely wiped out. Get the IHSA back in the lane where they should be, which is to be fair and to allow all these students to have every equal opportunity for scholarships that they can get.”

IHSA Executive Director Craig Anderson said in an email Wednesday that the association still opposes the proposed legislation because it puts principals and athletic directors in charge of deciding whether a student should be granted a waiver.

“It’s my understanding that the schools prefer a process whereby review of such participation is considered by the Association to create equity in opportunities across the membership,” Anderson said.

The bill now awaits further action in the Senate.

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**Social Security***from page 1*

The continuation of phone-based filing is an about-face of a plan set forth in mid-March by the Social Security Administration (SSA) to restrict telephone services for beneficiaries nationwide. Nearly 100,000 Illinoisans mobilized against the plan by writing to Congress during the month of March. Nationally, AARP members sent more than 2 million emails denouncing the proposed changes.

In response to the widespread pushback, the SSA issued a series of updates on X, formerly Twitter, withdrawing its previously announced plan and reinstating phone services for all claim types—including those applying for retirement, Social Security disability insurance (SSDI), Medicare and supplemental security income (SSI).

The new plan now requires in-person claims processing and identity proofing only for calls flagged as potentially fraudulent, according to a press release Monday from Illinois AARP. “This is great news for older Americans,” said Ryan Gruenenfelder, senior director of advocacy and outreach at AARP Illinois.

New rule caused web crashes, service disruptions

AARP Illinois and its members came to the Illinois state Capitol on April 10 to express their frustration with the recent federal actions and call on lawmakers to strengthen SSA customer service. Members have reported significant disruptions in service in recent months, including long wait times at SSA field offices, frequent website crashes and an increase in calls getting disconnected due to a lack of available representatives.

“As a retiree, I count on my Social Security benefits, and they actually provide more than half of my monthly income,” said Sandra McAvoy, an AARP member and volunteer with the Illinois state legislature. “That income has enabled me to live independently and very comfortably.”

In Illinois, about 2.3 million people receive some form of Social Security benefits. More than 40% of Illinois residents age 65 or older rely on Social Security for at least half of their income, while around 20% rely on it for at least 90% of their income, according to AARP.

The SSA was planning to end phone-based claims as an anti-fraud measure, saying the move would strengthen fraud prevention by forcing individuals to go online or visit local field offices to prove their identities and file for benefits.

AARP said this would have made it difficult for older adults, people with disabilities and those in rural areas to access their benefits.

“The proposed changes were unacceptable,” said Gruenenfelder.

About 140,000 people age 65 and older in Illinois live more than 45 miles roundtrip from the nearest Social Security office, according to an

April 8 report by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Once there, individuals report having to wait for hours in long lines to see an available customer service agent.

The only alternative to in-person and phone services — the SSA’s online portal system — is not a reliable option for many beneficiaries. Roughly 28% of households in Illinois do not have subscriptions to high-speed internet, according to a 2024 report from the Benton Institute for Broadband and Society.

Some callers to SSA waited hours to get help

These challenges were in place long before the now-rescinded changes. But AARP said there has since been a recent “rapid deterioration” in customer service that has resulted in callers waiting hours at a time to get connected with an available representative.

According to SSA data, the agency had a busy rate of 0% in 2024, meaning no callers received a pre-recorded message when trying to reach a service agent over the phone. But in March, that number spiked to 28.4%, indicating nearly 1 in 3 callers received a message saying the office’s lines were too busy to take their call.

The sudden disruption to customer service came after the agency’s announcement in February of a 12% target reduction of the SSA workforce and permanent closure of six of 10 regional offices by the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). These workforce reductions were announced despite promises by President Donald Trump not to cut or disrupt Social Security payments with his policies.

In his first speech since leaving the White House on Tuesday, April 15, former President Joe Biden spoke out against the Trump administration’s latest actions on Social Security, including sweeping workforce cuts, permanent closures of regional offices and the current customer service crisis.

“In fewer than 100 days, this new administration has done so much damage,” the former president said in Chicago, according to the AP. “They’ve taken a hatchet to the Social Security Administration.”

AARP celebrates the SSA’s decision to walk back its proposed changes to phone-based services, but Gruenenfelder said more oversight and resources are needed to improve the agency’s customer service moving forward.

“We’re urging Congress consistently, and the White House consistently, no matter who’s in the White House, to take actions to prioritize Social Security and protect it for the long term,” Gruenenfelder said.

*Isabella Schoonover is a graduate student in journalism with Northwestern University’s Medill School of Journalism, Media, Integrated Marketing Communications, and a fellow in its Medill Illinois News Bureau working in partnership with Capitol News Illinois.*

*Capitol News Illinois is a nonprofit, nonpartisan news service that distributes state government coverage to hundreds of news outlets statewide. It is funded primarily by the Illinois Press Foundation and the Robert R. McCormick Foundation.*



## LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF  
THE SEVENTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS

TH MSR Holdings LLC, Plaintiff,  
-v- Defendants, 2024FC40  
Jennifer S. Smith, et. al.

1205 E LINCOLN AVE, BELVIDERE, IL 61008  
NOTICE OF SALE PUB LIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on 12/17/2024, an agent of Auction.com LLC will conduct the auction in person at 12:00 PM on May 29, 2025 located at 601 N Main Street, Courthouse Steps, Belvidere, IL 61008, and will sell at public sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate. THAT PART OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 25, TOWNSHIP 44 NORTH, RANGE 3 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, AND THAT PART OF LOT ONE (1) IN BLOCK TWO (2) OF FAIRVIEW, IN THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION 25, TOWNSHIP AND RANGE AFORESAID, LYING NORTHEASTERLY OF THE NORTHEASTERLY LINE OF A TRACT OF LAND CONVEYED BY JOHN FRANCIS LEHANE AND CHARLOTTE H. LEHANE TO RAYMOND M. HANNA AND ALTA HANNA, AS RECORDED IN BOOK 114 OF DEEDS ON PAGE 407, DATED JUNE 15, 1955 IN THE OFFICE OF THE RECORDER OF DEEDS OF BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS AND DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: BEGINNING AT THE INTERSECTION OF THE WEST LINE OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 25, IN THE TOWNSHIP AND RANGE AFORESAID, WITH THE CENTER LINE OF EAST LINCOLN A VENUE, AND THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY ALONG THE SAID CENTER LINE OF EAST LINCOLN AVENUE, A DISTANCE OF 102.30 FEET TO A POINT; THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY AT AN ANGLE OF 116 DEGREES, 29 MINUTES, WITH THE LAST MENTIONED COURSE, A DISTANCE OF 175.00 FEET, MORE OR LESS TO THE NORTH BANK OF THE KISHWAUKEE RIVER; THENCE SOUTHWESTERLY ALONG THE NORTH BANK OF SAID RIVER WHERE SAID NORTH BANK INTERSECTS THE NORTHEASTERLY LINE OF AFORESAID HANNA LOT; RECORDED IN SAID BOOK 114 OF DEEDS OF PAGE 407; THENCE NORTHWESTERLY ALONG THE SAID NORTHEASTERLY LINE OF SAID HANNA LOT, TO THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID EAST LINCOLN AVENUE; THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY ALONG THE SAID SOUTH LINE OF EAST LINCOLN AVENUE, 25.6 FEET, MORE OR LESS, TO THE SAID WEST LINE OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 25; THENCE NORTH ALONG SAID WEST LINE OF SAID NORTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 25, TO THE PLACE OF BEGINNING, SITUATED IN THE COUNTY OF BOONE AND THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, LOCATED IN BELVIDERE. Commonly known as 1205 E LINCOLN AVE, BELVIDERE, IL 61008

Property Index No. 05-25-202-003 05-25-176-022

The real estate is improved with a Residential Property. The judgment amount was \$144,787.39 Sale Terms: 20% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the sale payable to Auction.com LLC. No third party checks will be accepted. All registered bidders need to provide a photo ID in order to bid. The balance, in certified funds/or wire transfer, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. (relief fee not required) The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court. Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a certificate of sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed to the real estate after confirmation of the sale.

The property will NOT be open for inspection and plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property, prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information. If this property is a condominium unit, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by the Condominium property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9 (g)(l) and (g)(4). If this property is a condominium unit which is part of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by the Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1).

IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOMEOWNER), YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION FOR 30 DAYS AFTER ENTRY OF AN ORDER OF POSSESSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15-1701 (C) OF THE ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE LAW.

For information, contact Plaintiff's attorney: CODILIS & ASSOCIATES PC (630) 794-5300 please refer to file number 14-24-01547.

Auction.com LLC 100 N LaSalle St., Suite 1400 Chicago, IL 60606 - 872-225-4985 You can also visit www.auction.com.

Attorney File No. 14-24-01547 Case Number: 2024FC40

NOTE: PURSUANT TO THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT, YOU ARE ADVISED THAT PLAINTIFF'S ATTORNEY IS DEEMED TO BE A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

13258330

Published in the Boone County Journal – April/17, 24, May 1, 2025

STATE OF ILLINOIS

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 17TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
BOONE COUNTY

**Leticia Isabel Urroz Medrano, Plaintiff**

**No. 2025-FA-1**

**Juan Jose Loya Quiralte, Defendant**

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

Notice is given you, Juan Jose Loya Quiralte, Defendant, that this cause has been commenced against you in this Court asking for total custody and other relief. Unless you file your response or otherwise file your appearance in this cause in the office of the Circuit Clerk of Boone County, Courthouse, 601 N. Main St, Belvidere, Illinois, on or before the 21st day of May, 2025, a Judgment or other relief as prayed for by the Plaintiff may be granted.

Pamela Coduto,

Clerk of the Circuit Court

Published in the Boone County Journal 04/17,24 05/01 P.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF  
THE SEVENTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS

**IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF HENRY GERALD POLZ III, Deceased**

**Case No. 2025-PR-000013**

PUBLICATION NOTICE

INDEPENDENT ADMINISTRATION

KNOWN AND UNKNOWN CREDITORS, CLAIMANTS, UNKNOWN HEIRS AND LEGATEES

1. Notice is hereby given of the death of HENRY GERALD POLZ III who died on January 31, 2025, a resident of Poplar Grove, Illinois.

2. The Representative for the estate is: HENRY POLZ IV

3. The Attorney for the estate is: Janet Willerman Ellingson  
30 N. Airlite Street, Suite D  
Elgin, Illinois 6012

4. Claims against the estate may be filed on or before October 17, 2025. Claims against the estate may be filed with the Clerk of the Circuit Court, 601 North Main Street, Belvidere, Illinois 61008 or with the Representative, or both. Any claim not filed within that period is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the Representative and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed.

5. On March 11, 2025 an Order Admitting the Will to Probate –

Appointing the Representative was entered.

6. The estate will be administrated without Court supervision unless an interested party terminates independent supervision administration by filing a petition to terminate under Article XXVIII 5/28-4 of the Probate Act (755ILCS 5/28-4)

Published in the Boone County Journal April 17, 24, May 1, 2025

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF  
THE SEVENTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

**In The Interest of : Giovanni Rivera, minor No. 25-JA-13  
Christian Martinez, All unknown fathers and All whom it may concern  
ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:**

Take notice that on March 18th, 2024, a petition was filed under the JUVENILE COURT ACT by Atty. Tricia Smith, State's Attorney, 601 North Main Street, Belvidere, Illinois 61008, in the Circuit Court of Boone County entitled "In the Interest of Giovanni Rivera, minor; At the Boone County Courthouse, located at 601 N. Main St., Belvidere, IL 61008, on May 29, 2025 at 1:30 PM CDT, or as soon thereafter as this cause may be heard, a hearing will be held upon the petition to have the child declared to be a ward of the Court under that Act. THE COURT HAS AUTHORITY IN THIS PROCEEDING TO TAKE FROM YOU THE CUSTODY AND GUARDIANSHIP OF THE MINOR, TO TERMINATE YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS, AND TO APPOINT A GUARDIAN WITH POWER TO CONSENT TO ADOPTION. YOU MAY LOSE ALL PARENTAL RIGHTS TO YOUR CHILD. IF THE PETITION REQUESTS THE TERMINATION OF YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS AND THE APPOINTMENT OF A GUARDIAN WITH THE POWER TO CONSENT TO ADOPTION YOU MAY LOSE ALL PARENTAL RIGHTS TO THE CHILD. Unless you appear you will not be entitled to further written notices or publication notices of the proceedings in this case, including the filing of an amended petition or a motion to terminate parental rights.

Now, unless you appear at the hearing and show cause against the petition, the allegations of the petition may stand admitted as against you and each of you, and an order or judgment entered.

Dated: April 14, 2025 Pamela Coduto, CIRCUIT CLERK

Published in The Boone County Journal: 04/17,24 05/01 – C

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF  
THE SEVENTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

**In The Interest of : Mia Rosas, minor No. 25-JA-14  
Christian Rosas, All unknown fathers and All whom it may concern  
ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:**

Take notice that on March 18th, 2024, a petition was filed under the JUVENILE COURT ACT by Atty. Tricia Smith, State's Attorney, 601 North Main Street, Belvidere, Illinois 61008, in the Circuit Court of Boone County entitled "In the Interest of Mia Rosas, minor; At the Boone County Courthouse, located at 601 N. Main St., Belvidere, IL 61008, on May 29, 2025 at 1:30 PM CDT, or as soon thereafter as this cause may be heard, a hearing will be held upon the petition to have the child declared to be a ward of the Court under that Act. THE COURT HAS AUTHORITY IN THIS PROCEEDING TO TAKE FROM YOU THE CUSTODY AND GUARDIANSHIP OF THE MINOR, TO TERMINATE YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS, AND TO APPOINT A GUARDIAN WITH POWER TO CONSENT TO ADOPTION. YOU MAY LOSE ALL PARENTAL RIGHTS TO YOUR CHILD. IF THE PETITION REQUESTS THE TERMINATION OF YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS AND THE APPOINTMENT OF A GUARDIAN WITH THE POWER TO CONSENT TO ADOPTION YOU MAY LOSE ALL PARENTAL RIGHTS TO THE CHILD. Unless you appear you will not be entitled to further written notices or publication notices of the proceedings in this case, including the filing of an amended petition or a motion to terminate parental rights.

Now, unless you appear at the hearing and show cause against the petition, the allegations of the petition may stand admitted as against you and each of you, and an order or judgment entered.

Dated: April 14, 2025 Pamela Coduto, CIRCUIT CLERK

Published in The Boone County Journal: 04/17,24 05/01 – C

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF  
THE SEVENTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

**In The Interest of : Edmar Rosas, minor No. 25-JA-15  
Christian Rosas, All unknown fathers and All whom it may concern  
ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:**

Take notice that on March 18th, 2024, a petition was filed under the JUVENILE COURT ACT by Atty. Tricia Smith, State's Attorney, 601 North Main Street, Belvidere, Illinois 61008, in the Circuit Court of Boone County entitled "In the Interest of Edmar Rosas, minor; At the Boone County Courthouse, located at 601 N. Main St., Belvidere, IL 61008, on May 29, 2025 at 1:30 PM CDT, or as soon thereafter as this cause may be heard, a hearing will be held upon the petition to have the child declared to be a ward of the Court under that Act. THE COURT HAS AUTHORITY IN THIS PROCEEDING TO TAKE FROM YOU THE CUSTODY AND GUARDIANSHIP OF THE MINOR, TO TERMINATE YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS, AND TO APPOINT A GUARDIAN WITH POWER TO CONSENT TO ADOPTION. YOU MAY LOSE ALL PARENTAL RIGHTS TO YOUR CHILD. IF THE PETITION REQUESTS THE TERMINATION OF YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS AND THE APPOINTMENT OF A GUARDIAN WITH THE POWER TO CONSENT TO ADOPTION YOU MAY LOSE ALL PARENTAL RIGHTS TO THE CHILD. Unless you appear you will not be entitled to further written notices or publication notices of the proceedings in this case, including the filing of an amended petition or a motion to terminate parental rights.

Now, unless you appear at the hearing and show cause against the petition, the allegations of the petition may stand admitted as against you and each of you, and an order or judgment entered.

Dated: April 14, 2025

Pamela Coduto, CIRCUIT CLERK

Published in The Boone County Journal: 04/17,24 05/01 – C

PUBLIC NOTICE

Manchester Rural Fire Protection District #5. Public Notice is hereby given that at 7:00 p.m. April 24, 2025 a meeting will be held at Manchester Town Hall, 20904 Grade School Road, Caledonia, Illinois

The Tentative Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for the new fiscal year will be approved.

Joel Nussbaum, Secretary

Published in the Boone County Journal 04/24/2025

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 17TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
PROBATE DIVISION

**IN RE THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF Renato Garza Jr ,  
Deceased  
NO: CASE 2025PR11  
CLAIM NOTICE**

NOTICE is given of the death of RENATO GARZA JR on September 23, 2024. Letters of Office were issued on March 19, 2025 to: Ena O Garza who is the legal representative of the estate. The attorney is Christian Solares, 4855 E State St Ste 24, Rockford, IL 61108.

Claims against the estate may be filed within six (6) months from the date of first publication. Any claim not filed within six (6) months from the date of first publication or claims not filed within three (3) months from the date of mailing or delivery of Notice to Creditors, if mailing is required by Section 18-3 of the Illinois Probate Act, 1975, as amended whichever date is later. Any claim not filed by the requisite date stated above shall be barred.

Claims may be filed in the office of the Boone County Circuit Clerk-Probate Div. at the Boone County Courthouse, 601 N. Main St., Belvidere, IL 61008, or with the representative or both.

Copies of claims filed with the Circuit Clerk's Office-Probate Div., must be mailed or delivered to the estate legal representative and to the attorney within ten days (10) after it has been filed.

DATED: 03/26/2025 ENA O. GARZA, ADMINISTRATOR  
CHRISTIAN SOLARES #6325075

Attorney for Estate

4855 E State St Ste 24

Rockford, IL 61108

815/312-1703

Published in The Boone County Journal 4-24, May 1, 8, 2025

## ASSUMED NAMES

STATE OF ILLINOIS COUNTY OF BOONE COUNTY  
ASSUMED NAME CERTIFICATE OF INTENTION

No. DBA4229 - The undersigned person(s) do hereby certify that a CONSUMER SERVICES business is or is to be conducted or transacted under the name of XANDER'S KONVENIENT KLEAN that its location is or will be 10737 US HIGHWAY 20 in GARDEN PRAIRIE, in the County of Boone County, State of Illinois, and that the true or real name(s) of the person(s) owning, conducting, or transacting the same with the post office address or address of said person(s) is shown as below Phone Number: 815-566-2140  
ALEXANDER EDWARD MIGASI 10737 US HIGHWAY 20  
GARDEN PRAIRIE, ILLINOIS 61038

I, Julie A. Bliss, County Clerk And Recorder of Boone County, in the State aforesaid, do the hereby certify that the within is a true and correct copy of an Assumed Name Certificate on file in my office.

Dated: April 09, 2025 Julie A. Bliss, County Clerk and Recorder

Published in Boone County Journal 04/17,24, 05/01 - P

STATE OF ILLINOIS COUNTY OF BOONE COUNTY  
ASSUMED NAME CERTIFICATE OF INTENTION

No. DBA4227 - The undersigned person(s) do hereby certify that a MOBILE VENDING MACHINES business is or is to be conducted or transacted under the name of NEXTGEN VENDING that its location is or will be 345 CHANNING AVENUE in BELVIDERE, in the County of Boone County, State of Illinois, and that the true or real name(s) of the person(s) owning, conducting, or transacting the same with the post office address or address of said person(s) is shown below.

Phone Number: 779-548-0544

DOMINIC CESARONE 345 CHANNING  
AVENUE BELVIDERE, ILLINOIS 61008

I, Julie A. Bliss, County Clerk And Recorder of Boone County, in the State aforesaid, do the hereby certify that the within is a true and correct copy of an Assumed Name Certificate on file in my office. Dated: April 1, 2025

Julie A Bliss, County Clerk and Recorder

Published in Boone County Journal 04/10,17,24 P.

STATE OF ILLINOIS COUNTY OF BOONE COUNTY  
ASSUMED NAME CERTIFICATE OF INTENTION

No. DBA4228 - The undersigned person(s) do hereby certify that a COTTAGE FOOD business is or is to be conducted or transacted under the name of GRAMMY'S HOMEMADE JAMS PICKLES SALSAS & MORE that its location is or will be 114 QUEENSBURY PLACE NE in POPLAR GROVE, in the County of Boone County, State of Illinois, and that the true or real name(s) of the person(s) owning, conducting, or transacting the same with the post office address or address of said person(s) is shown below.

Phone Number: 815-262-6083

ROSE ANNE RUDNY 114 QUEENSBURY PLACE  
NE POPLAR GROVE, ILLINOIS 61008

I, Julie A. Bliss, County Clerk And Recorder of Boone County, in the State aforesaid, do the hereby certify that the within is a true and correct copy of an Assumed Name Certificate on file in my office. Dated: April 08 2025

Julie A Bliss, County Clerk and Recorder

Published in Boone County Journal 4/17, 4/24, 5/1 - P

STATE OF ILLINOIS COUNTY OF BOONE COUNTY  
ASSUMED NAME CERTIFICATE OF INTENTION

No. DBA4230 - The undersigned person(s) do hereby certify that a LANDSCAPING business is or is to be conducted or transacted under the name of T & G LANDSCAPING PLUS that its location is or will be 124 VALHALLA DR NE in POPLAR GROVE, in the County of Boone County, State of Illinois, and that the true or real name(s) of the person(s) owning, conducting, or transacting the same with the post office address or address of said person(s) is shown as below. Phone Number: 815-919-5393  
GUSTAVO VILCHIS 124 VALHALLA DR NE  
POPLAR GROVE, ILLINOIS 61065

I, Julie A. Bliss, County Clerk And Recorder of Boone County, in the State aforesaid, do the hereby certify that the within is a true and correct copy of an Assumed Name Certificate on file in my office. Dated: April 22, 2025

Julie A. Bliss, County Clerk and Recorder

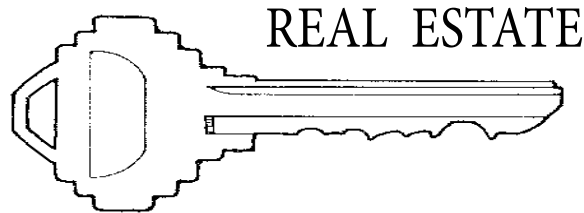
Published in Boone County Journal 04/24, 05/01,08 - P

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has old newspapers free  
for picking up from time to time.  
Call to see if any are available



IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF  
THE SEVENTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS

TH MSR Holdings LLC, Plaintiff,  
-v- Defendants. 2024FC40  
Jennifer S. Smith; et. al.

1205 E LINCOLN AVE, BELVIDERE, IL 61008  
NOTICE OF SALE PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on 12/17/2024, an agent of Auction.com LLC will conduct the auction in person at 12:00 PM on May 29, 2025 located at 601 N Main Street, Courthouse Steps, Belvidere, IL 61008, and will sell at public sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate.

Property Index No. 05-25-202-003 05-25-176-022  
The real estate is improved with a Residential Property. The judgment amount was \$144,787.39 Sale Terms: 20% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the sale payable to Auction.com LLC. No third party checks will be accepted. All registered bidders need to provide a photo ID in order to bid. The balance, in certified funds/wire transfer, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. (relief fee not required) The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court. Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a certificate of sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed to the real estate after confirmation of the sale.

The property will NOT be open for inspection and plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property, prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information. If this property is a condominium unit, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by the Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9 (g)(1) and (g)(4). If this property is a condominium unit which is part of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by the Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1).

IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOMEOWNER), YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION FOR 30 DAYS AFTER ENTRY OF AN ORDER OF POSSESSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15-1701 (C) OF THE ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE LAW.

For information, contact Plaintiff's attorney: CODILIS & ASSOCIATES PC (630) 794-5300 please refer to file number 14-24-01547.

Auction.com LLC 100 N LaSalle St., Suite 1400 Chicago, IL 60606 - 872-225-4985 You can also visit www.auction.com.

Attorney File No. 14-24-01547 Case Number: 2024FC40

NOTE: PURSUANT TO THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT, YOU ARE ADVISED THAT PLAINTIFF'S ATTORNEY IS DEEMED TO BE A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

13258330

Published in the Boone County Journal – April/17, 24, May 1, 2025

lieutenant governor. Durbin has since rose through the ranks of the Senate, chairing the powerful Senate Judiciary Committee and now serving as the No. 2 ranking Democrat in the Senate as minority whip.

"The people of Illinois have honored me with this responsibility longer than anyone elected to the Senate in our state's history. I'm truly grateful," Durbin said.

Durbin has kept decisions about his political future a closely guarded secret, telling reporters as recently as last week that he has not made any decisions about his future.

Durbin said at a news conference in downstate Taylorville last month that "whether I'm still physically able, mentally able to deal with the issues," were the top factors guiding his decision. At the time, he suggested he was.

His retirement is expected to set off a flurry of moves by some of the state's top Democrats who are widely believed to be interested in the seat, including Lt. Gov. Juliana Stratton and U.S. Reps. Raja Krishnamoorthi, Lauren Underwood and Robin Kelly.

"We are also fortunate to have a strong Democratic bench ready to serve," Durbin said. "We need them now more than ever."

With Durbin stepping aside in 2027, Sen. Tammy Duckworth, a Hoffman Estates Democrat, will become Illinois' senior senator.

"It is only because of Dick's empathy, patience, support and mentorship that I am in the United States Senate today," Duckworth said in a statement. "It has been the honor of a lifetime to get to work alongside a leader who embodies what it means to be a true public servant."

Gov. JB Pritzker said in a statement that Durbin has been "a consistent leader and reliable champion" for Illinois.

"The people of Illinois should take great pride having a leader like Dick Durbin represent us in the U.S. Senate," Pritzker said. "I have been proud to be his partner and am even more proud to call him my friend. He will leave some extraordinary shoes to fill – and has given us all an example of courage and righteousness for the work ahead."

*Capitol News Illinois is a nonprofit, nonpartisan news service that distributes state government coverage to hundreds of news outlets statewide. It is funded primarily by the Illinois Press Foundation and the Robert R. McCormick Foundation.*

## Pritzker Balances Messaging as Some Dems Encourage Party To Avoid LGBTQ Issues

*Newsom, Emanuel argue the party is focusing too much on 'bathroom' issues*

By Ben Szalinski *Capitol News Illinois*

When Gov. JB Pritzker tells audiences how he became interested in politics, it often starts with stories about his mother.

As a child growing up in the San Francisco Bay Area, Pritzker often shares, he'd attend marches, rallies and protests with his mother in support of abortion, women's rights and LGBTQ issues. Those experiences, Pritzker says, set the foundation for many of his progressive beliefs.

"I'm living proof that introducing your kids to the gay agenda might result in them growing up to be governor," Pritzker told a crowd at a Human

Rights Campaign event in Los Angeles in March.

Pritzker has made supporting LGBTQ rights a regular part of his platform as governor, including speaking at dinner events for the HRC and Equality Illinois in recent months. He's set to speak to the New Hampshire Democratic Party on Sunday – one of the first Democratic presidential primary states.

But some Democrats, who are often named as possible 2028 Democratic presidential candidates alongside Pritzker, think the party needs to talk less about LGBTQ issues such as transgender athletes.

"We weren't good on the kitchen table issues; we weren't really good on the family room — the only room we really did well on in the house was the bathroom," former ambassador to Japan and former Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel said on a podcast with California Gov. Gavin Newsom last week. "We not only look like we were on the cultural periphery, we look like that's what was front and center for us."

Newsom, who is also a second term governor like Pritzker, ignited a controversy among Democrats earlier this year when, in a separate podcast interview with far-right activist Charlie Kirk, broke from his party and voiced opposition to transgender women competing in women's sports.

"I think it's an issue of fairness. I completely agree with you on that ... It's deeply unfair," Newsom told Kirk.

Speaking in Newsom's state last month at the HRC event, Pritzker avoided criticizing the California governor, instead focusing on what he describes as the Trump administration's attack on individual rights. He warned Trump's executive actions targeting transgender people in the military and in sports could one day lead to orders targeting marriage licenses for same-sex couples.

"I won't let hope be a blindfold and I won't continue to advocate that we wage conventional political fights when what we really need is to become street fighters," Pritzker said in L.A.

The HRC dinner was another example of Pritzker introducing himself to audiences outside Illinois, but he told reporters at a recent news conference in Springfield that people shouldn't draw conclusions about his remarks.

"I gave a speech about what I believe," Pritzker said. "It wasn't aimed at anybody. It wasn't about creating a lane. These are things that I've said here in the state of Illinois. I repeated them in another venue. I'm perfectly happy about that. To the extent that people see it as a lane, that's their view."

Read more: Pritzker emerging as one of Trump's most vocal Democratic critics

Pritzker's views are mainstream in the Democrat Party, University of Illinois Springfield political science professor Jason Pierceson said, who specializes on the politics of gender and sexuality. He said it's Newsom and Emanuel who are trying to carve a more contrarian lane.

"I think it's less that Pritzker is carving out a lane than about embracing trans rights and LGBTQ rights," he said in an interview.

While Pritzker has not joined Newsom and Emanuel's calls to avoid focusing on transgender issues, he has also suggested that Democrats make economic issues their top priority.

"Here's where Democrats have to be honest with ourselves: Donald Trump didn't just ride into power on the backs of oligarchs who wanted tax cuts so badly they were willing to throw a record stock market into the toilet for them," Pritzker said at an event last month at the Center for American Progress in Washington, D.C. "No, a number

*Continued on page 8*

## Budget from page 3

responsibilities in addition to the critical work of vigorously defending the rights of Illinois residents from unconstitutional attacks by the Trump administration."

Raoul also did not provide specific answers to questions from Republican lawmakers about how much his office has spent, or how many hours his attorneys have worked, pursuing litigation against the Trump administration.

"Our attorneys are, you know, they're not billing hours. They're on salary," he said. "And so whether they work 20 hours in a day or eight hours in a day, they are compensated."

Legislative committees are still in the process of holding hearings on each state agency's budget request for the upcoming year. A final budget is expected to be voted on by the end of May.

*Capitol News Illinois is a nonprofit, nonpartisan news service that distributes state government coverage to hundreds of news outlets statewide. It is funded primarily by the Illinois Press Foundation and the Robert R. McCormick Foundation.*

## Durbin from page 1

Durbin's retirement will end a 44-year congressional career. The East St. Louis native who has lived in Springfield for the last five decades was first elected to the U.S. House in 1982.

Durbin, 80, won election to the U.S. Senate in 1996 to succeed retiring Democratic Sen. Paul Simon, to whom Durbin served as legal counsel in the early 1970s when Simon was the state's

**Prizker**

*from page 7*

of Americans, 49.8%, went to the ballot box agreeing with Democrat positions on the issues most important to their lives, and they picked the other guy.”

Gallup polling from September 2024 shows the economy was the top issue for voters going into the election, with 52% calling it “extremely important.” At the bottom of the 22 issues polled: transgender rights, with 18% of voters calling it “extremely important” and 36% saying it was “not important.”

“There’s a lot of intensity by activists, particularly on the right against trans rights, but I’m not sure that translates into votes for the median voter or the independent voter,” Pierceson said.

Pierceson said transgender rights get a lot of attention in campaigns, but voters aren’t making final decisions based only on the issue. That could mean Newsom and Emanuel are calling for an overcorrection to the Democrat platform.

“There’s a tendency I think in the professional political class to overestimate the conservatism of voters and to always argue that the most conservative position will be the most politically potent and powerful position,” Pierceson said.

Pritzker was confronted with polling data on LGBTQ issues during his first FOX News interview as governor earlier this month. The March FOX News poll showed 68% of respondents favor President Donald Trump’s executive order attempting to ban transgender women from women’s sports, and 54% support federal policy that recognizes only two genders. Pritzker brushed aside the poll.

“You can go issue by issue and you can ask a question whether people support this issue or that,” he told the FOX News host. “Here’s what people really care about: They care about their health care, they care about their affordability, they care about the kitchen table issues that really matter every day.”

Asked by a reporter last week about his response

on FOX News, Pritzker said, “We’ve got to stand up for people’s civil rights. It is vile and inhumane to go after the smallest minority and attack them as if it’s something that is OK in this country.” But he pivoted back to Trump’s tariff policy and said affordability issues “are the ones that affect them in their homes every day.”

Pierceson said it’s too soon to know what the top issues in the next two election cycles will be, but the economy will likely be one of them. He also said rather than abandon LGBTQ issues in campaigns, Democrats should reframe the issue of transgender rights, adding he doesn’t expect most of the party to follow Newsom’s and Emanuel’s position.

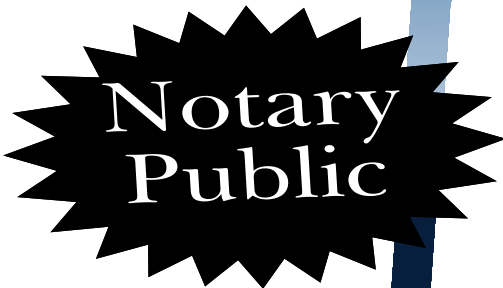
“I think one of the things moving forward to think about is can Democrats move away from the athletic issue to a broader narrative about discrimination and maltreatment that maybe ties into some immigration issues and other arbitrary decisions made by the Trump administration,” Pierceson said.

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