

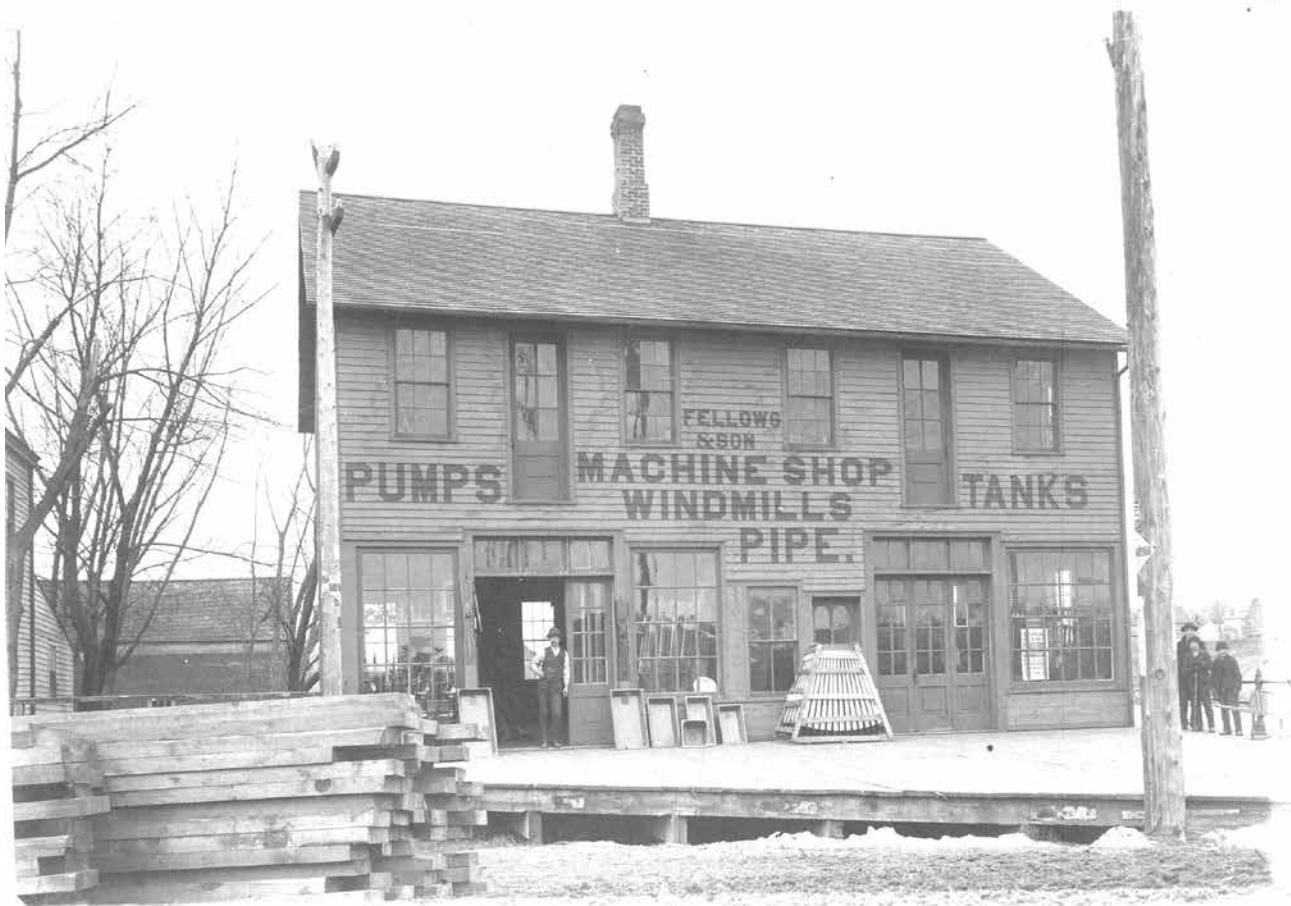
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Fellows & Son A “Machine Shop”

David Larson

In Belvidere in the latter 19th Century, the machine shop was (J.A.) Fellows & Son. Earliest evidence of this business is January 1853, embedded in a news story in the *Belvidere Standard* published by Ralph Roberts. A charge by Fellows & Son of \$1.12 for sewer pipe was mentioned in the story. That would be about \$42 dollars today. It must have been a short pipe. In 1853, Belvidere was struggling to establish a government. It dissolved at least once, falling back to the county for municipal affairs. Belvidere city government was not formally recognized by the State of Illinois until 1881. The establishment of a bank was taking shape in 1853. The railroad had arrived two years ago on the south-side of the river, which was exploding with growth, due to the railroad's arrival. Fellows & Son had built a building at 105 South State Street, near the present

continued on page 3



New Laws: Illinois Expands Job-Protected Leave For Parents With Newborns in NICU

Laws also address AI in hiring, workplace transparency, organ donation leave, more

Brenden Moore *Capitol News Illinois*

Illinois workers with a newborn in a neonatal intensive care unit will soon have additional access to job-protected, unpaid leave.

Gov. JB Pritzker signed House Bill 2978, dubbed the Family Neonatal Intensive Care Leave Act, earlier this year and it takes effect Jan. 1. It requires employers of between 16 and 50 workers to provide up to 10 days of unpaid leave to employees who have a child in the NICU. Larger employers must provide up to 20 days.

The law applies to both part- and full-time workers. It covers a broader swath of workers than the federal Family and Medical Leave Act — the law requiring public agencies, K-12 schools and private companies with at least 50 employees to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave per year. Workers eligible for FMLA must exhaust that

continued on page 4

New Laws: Illinois’ Grocery Tax To End, Aquifer Protections Begin

Bills regulating reservation apps, single-use plastics to take effect Jan. 1

Ben Szalinski & Brenden Moore
Capitol News Illinois

Illinois’ statewide 1% grocery tax will go away on Jan. 1, though many people will continue to pay it at the local level.

Data compiled by the Illinois Municipal League shows that 656 municipalities — a little more than half of the state’s municipalities — have passed an ordinance establishing their own grocery tax. Those communities are home to 7.2 million people, or 56.5% of the state’s population. Three counties — Washington, Wabash and Moultrie — have also approved countywide grocery taxes.

Gov. JB Pritzker signed a bill in 2024 eliminating the 1% statewide grocery tax, which he touted as a measure to ease residents’ tax burden. But because the revenue from the state grocery tax went to municipal governments, rather than state coffers, the measure allowed local governments to levy their own 1% tax via ordinance, rather than a

continued on page 4

Justice Department Sues for Access to Illinois Voter Rolls

Illinois among at least 19 states being sued for voter data

Peter Hancock *Capitol News Illinois*

The U.S. Department of Justice filed suit against the state of Illinois seeking access to its complete, unredacted voter registration database, including sensitive personal data such as dates of birth, driver’s license numbers and partial Social Security numbers.

The lawsuit, which was filed in U.S. District Court in Springfield, makes Illinois at least the 19th state to be sued for such information.

The Justice Department has been seeking that information since July, but the Illinois State Board of Elections so far has declined to hand over the information, citing both state and federal privacy laws that it says prohibit it from handing over such information.

Instead, in August, the agency gave DOJ a copy of the same database it makes available under state law to political parties and candidates. That file includes voters’ names, addresses and their age at the time they registered, but not their date of birth, driver’s license, state ID or Social Security number.

Federal officials have said they want the information to determine whether Illinois is complying

continued on page 5



Eileen (Kruckenberg) Anderson, 73, Harvard, Dec 28
 Richard "Dick" Bailey, 82, Cherry Valley, Dec 25
 Bradley Blake, 88, Belvidere, December 23
 Ralph Carlson, 83, Formerly of Belvidere, Dec 22
 Barbara Coffey, 77, Belvidere, December 20
 Olivia Drinkwater, 86, Harvard, December 19
 Leonard Giese, 78, Marengo, December 13
 Sherri Johnson, 62, Capron, December 30
 Rebecca Lamb, 78, Belvidere, December 22
 Mary "Fran" Layman, 87, Harvard, December 25
 Patricia Lewis, 78, Belvidere, December 15
 Della Mickus, 72, Marengo, December 19
 Deborah Pankhurst, 72, Belvidere, December 23
 Thomas Reed, 83, Marengo, December 19
 Veronica Sanchez, 34, Harvard, December 24
 Pauline Schnurr, 83, Belvidere, December 21
 Shirley (Aardema) Schoelkopf, 84, Marengo, Dec 29
 Dixie Stempfle, 88, Belvidere, December 19
 Mark Wagner, 78, Belvidere, December 19

Quidnunc



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

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Illinois Maternal Mortality Report Finds Rise in Pregnancy-Related Deaths

Black women were more than twice as likely as white women to die from a pregnancy-related condition

Maggie Dougherty *Capitol News Illinois*

Preventable pregnancy-related deaths rose and stark racial disparities remained in the Illinois Department of Public Health's most recent maternal mortality report.

The report studied 219 deaths that occurred in Illinois in 2021 and 2022 during or within one year of pregnancy. The two committees that reviewed the deaths determined 94 to be related to pregnancy. This is an increase from past data, which have been published in two-to-three-year increments since 2015.

"Each maternal death represents far more than a statistic: it is a profound and often preventable loss that leaves lasting emotional, social, and economic scars on families, communities, and society," the report stated. "Beyond the immediate tragedy, each loss signals a broader failure to provide equitable, comprehensive, and culturally competent maternal care."

Of the pregnancy-related deaths that occurred in 2021 and 2022, the committees found 91% could have been prevented.

Common causes

As in past years, substance use disorder remained the most common cause of pregnancy-related death, accounting for nearly a third of the deaths in the recent data. Other leading causes included blood clots and COVID-19, which rose in prevalence as the cause of death in 12% and 11% of deaths, respectively. Deaths due to hemorrhage, or postpartum bleeding, doubled to 10% from 5% in the previous period.

Black Illinoisans had the highest rate of maternal mortality at 78 deaths per 100,000 live births. The report found discrimination was present in 74% of the deaths related to Black pregnancies, making it the most common contributing factor in Black pregnancy-related deaths.

In August, Gov. JB Pritzker signed House Bill 2517, requiring obstetric care providers to take anti-bias training. The course was designed to educate maternal health care providers on historic racial discrepancies to reduce implicit biases and improve health outcomes.

Black mothers were more than twice as likely as white mothers to die from any pregnancy-related cause, including substance use disorder or mental health conditions, but more than three times as likely to die from purely medical pregnancy-related conditions.

Obesity was the second most common contributing factor for Black maternal deaths, followed by mental health conditions and substance use disorder.

Mental health conditions can include postpartum depression, in which individuals may develop feelings of suicidal ideation or wanting to self-harm after pregnancy. Substance use disorder results in a pattern of uncontrolled use of drugs, medication or inhalants that poorly affects an individual's ability to function, including failure to meet obligations at school, work or home.

Mental health conditions were the most common contributing factor for white and Hispanic pregnancy-related deaths. Discrimination was also a factor in nearly a third of deaths for Hispanic maternal deaths, while substance use disorder was only present in 9% of deaths for that population.

Substance use disorder was more prevalent in white pregnancy-related deaths than those of other racial groups, present in one-in-three deaths.

The committees found that all deaths due to mental health conditions and substance use disorder were potentially preventable, with approximately 20% of those classified as having a "good chance" of prevention had there been "reasonable changes to any provider, facility, patient, community, or system."

Those with a high school education or less were more than twice as likely to die from a pregnancy-related cause than those with a post-secondary education. Medicaid recipients died from pregnancy-related conditions almost four times as frequently as those with private insurance.

Geography, timing

Rates of pregnancy-related mortality were highest in urban counties outside of the Chicago area and in the city of Chicago, with maternal mortality rates in Chicago increasing over the last three report periods.

Counties surrounding Cook County, namely DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will, had the lowest levels of pregnancy-related mortality.

The maternal mortality rate in rural counties decreased marginally since the past data period. But the report noted that pregnant people in rural locations still face barriers — including lack of providers and long travel distances — to accessing specialized care for mental health services, substance use disorder and other chronic conditions.

Fewer than a third of pregnancy-related deaths reviewed in the report happened during pregnancy, with 43% occurring within the first month after pregnancy and another third of deaths occurring two or more months after pregnancy. Deaths due to substance use disorder and mental health conditions were more likely to occur after birth.

Recommendations

The report presents four key recommendations outlined in the Illinois Blueprint for Birth Equity, a multi-agency and stakeholder project aimed at improving maternal health care and birth outcomes in the state.

The blueprint, released in September 2025 with the input of advocates, experts and health care providers, is part of a larger birth equity initiative spearheaded by Black midwives and doulas in collaboration with Lt. Gov. Juliana Stratton.

Those recommendations centered around *continued on page 3*

Maternal Mortality from page 2

expanding access to quality and specialized care. It called on health insurance plans, including Medicaid, to incentivize maternal health providers to practice in rural areas and small hospitals.

It also recommended that hospitals employ a social worker or case manager to help with resource coordination and postpartum case management, as well as engaging in more coordination with community-based midwives and doulas.

Building on the blueprint's recommendations, the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services announced new coverage for pregnant and parenting Medicaid customers. That change means that Medicaid now covers home visiting services, including health education, blood pressure monitoring, behavioral health screenings, domestic violence education and screenings, stress management and service referrals.

The program, which took effect on Nov. 21, 2025, was intended to bridge gaps in access to timely, quality care, according to DHFS. Home visits can replace or supplement in-clinic care for families with limited access to transportation, busy work schedules or other barriers to attending appointments.

In a letter introducing the blueprint, Stratton outlined the Pritzker administration's commitment to improving maternal health and birth equity.

"Every woman deserves to bring life into this world safely and with dignity, and every family deserves to bring their child home with the resources they need to grow," Stratton wrote.

"Whether you're in the heart of Chicago's loop or on a farm in Tuscola, Ill., no family should welcome a new soul with grief for the one who carried it."

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Fellows

Dari-Ripple. This photograph was taken in the 1890s, when the shop was one where farmers and local residents would come if they needed repairs or metal fabrication. If one needed pipes made to carry water from a well to a house, Fellows & Son could manage the task. What more could anyone ask from a machine shop? As the years passed, with the installation of sanitary sewer and a public water supply, The plumbing business became Fellow/Fellows major activity. With Fellows & Sons at the physical center of town, it was certainly a handy location to do business. This was long before there was a north or south side perception in the village. Anyone that travelled through Downtown Belvidere would sooner-or-later, pass Fellows & Son.

Fellows and his sons were both adept in the operation of a forge. They could bend steel and iron using vises and various other winches to hold the metal secure and then to supply heat and pressure to reshape the steel into almost any sort of bend or contortion that a customer wanted.

Fellows & Sons did not merely sell pumps, he and his sons made pumps. One must remember, the photograph was shot in the 1890s. There was no Internet, there were no department or building supply stores where pumps or other steel and iron machines could easily be bought. Most customers had to go to a machine shop where the machine or item could be made, by hand, to suit their needs.

Machine shops were an invention that emerged out of the 19th Century. Machine shops came about in response to the growing effects of the Industrial Revolution. As industrialization grew and expanded across the country, the need for machine shops or shops within a shop became an even greater need. Tool and dye makers were needed, as were those that could create parts, gears, shafts, or the like to improve upon a larger machine. What was so much a part of the Industrial Revolution was the manufacture of machine parts that were used to make other machines.

Not only did the shop work with iron and steel to repair harnesses for carriages, but they also repaired mole boards for steel plows and other farm implements that were just then becoming popular. Later versions of machine shops evolved through much of the 20th Century. Some machine shops began to specialize during the middle and latter 20th Century shortening, bending, or lengthening the frames of trucks and heavy trucks. There have been many such shops across northern Illinois

from page 1

where this type of work was done.

Though Fellows & Son had a growing business at the State Street Bridge in Belvidere for a number of decades, only the memory of their machine shop is what is left. The last newspaper evidence is in a 1910 newspaper advertisement. Though the business is gone, perhaps for some that remain in Belvidere, they will agree, the Fellows & Son machine shop is not forgotten.



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Labor Laws**from page 1**

leave first before utilizing NICU leave.

Employers covered under the law must maintain their employee's health insurance benefits and guarantee their reinstatement upon the conclusion of leave. Employers can't force workers to exhaust their paid leave instead of unpaid NICU leave, though employees can take it if they choose.

Violations may result in fines of up to \$5,000. Locally, all representatives voted yes except Chesney and Sosnowski who did not vote.

Here are some other new labor laws that take effect in 2026. Unless otherwise noted, local senators Chesney, Stadelman and Syverson and representatives Cabello, McCombie, Sosnowski, Vella and West voted yes.

AI in employment decisions

An amendment to the Illinois Human Rights Act, House Bill 3773, prohibits use of AI in employment decisions such as recruitment, hiring and promotion if that use results in discrimination due to race, religion, sex and age.

The law, which goes into effect Jan. 1, will require employers to disclose use of AI in employment decisions. The measure, however, could potentially run afoul of a recent order that limits how states can regulate AI. Chesney did not vote.

Documenting domestic violence

House Bill 1278 prevents employers from disciplining employees for using work devices to document domestic violence, sexual violence, gender violence or other forms of violence against them or a family member. Employers also have to grant employees access to such documentation and communications stored on the devices.

The law was inspired by a New York woman who used her work device to document domestic abuse committed by her husband. She was disciplined by her employer and later murdered by her husband.

Workplace transparency

House Bill 3638 amends the Illinois Workplace Transparency Act to broaden the definition of "unlawful employment practice" to include any act prohibited by the Illinois Human Rights Act, the federal Civil Rights Act and any other state or federal law covering employment issues.

Employment contracts can also no longer include terms that limit an employee's ability to engage in "concerted activity" like collective bargaining. And it prohibits contract stipulations that shorten the statute of limitations for employee claims, apply the law of another state to claims or require claims be resolved outside Illinois. Cabello and Sosnowski voted no.

Paid leave for organ donors

House Bill 1616 extends paid leave requirements for organ donors to part-time employees.

Under the law, workers can use up to 10 days leave per year to serve as an organ donor. Part-time workers' pay for these days will be their average daily pay rate over the previous two months. Cabello, McCombie and Sosnowski voted no.

Military honors

Under Senate Bill 220, employers with more than 50 workers must offer up to eight hours of paid leave per month — capped at 40 hours per

calendar year — for employees to participate in a military funeral honors detail. It is in addition to regular paid time off.

Unemployment benefits

House Bill 3200 allows for someone who voluntarily leaves their job for mental health reasons to be eligible for unemployment benefits. It is a three-year pilot program that sunsets Dec. 24, 2028. Cabello, McCombie and Sosnowski voted no. Chesney and Syverson did not vote.

Maggie Dougherty contributed to this report.

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.

Groceries**from page 1**

referendum to voters.

Locally, Belvidere, Cherry Valley and Poplar Grove do not have a local grocery tax. They join Chicago and Springfield, which are also not charging a 1% grocery tax. (In Chicago, grocery shoppers are still subjected to an RTA sales tax.) Most other local communities, including Rockford, Harvard and Marengo, enacted the local grocery tax.

Here are some other laws that will take effect in the new year. Unless otherwise noted, local senators Chesney, Stadelman and Syverson and representatives Cabello, McCombie, Sosnowski, Vella and West voted yes.

Hotel soaps phased out

The phase-out of small, single-use plastic bottles in Illinois hotel rooms continues.

Senate Bill 2960, passed and signed into law in 2024, bars hotels from providing toiletries such as shampoo, conditioner and bath soap in less than six-ounce plastic containers unless specifically requested by the hotel guest.

The ban took effect in hotels with 50 or more rooms on July 1 and takes effect for all hotels starting in 2026. Hotels in violation will receive a written warning for the first offense and be subject to fines of up to \$1,500 for each subsequent violation.

The legislation is intended to spur the state's hospitality industry to reduce its plastic footprint by shifting to either refillable toiletry containers or larger plastic bottles. Chesney, Syverson, Cabello, McCombie and Sosnowski voted no.

Similar laws have been enacted in states like California, New York and Washington.

Squatter removal

Senate Bill 1563 will make it easier for authorities to remove squatters who are illegally staying at someone else's residence.

The law clarifies that a court-ordered eviction is not required for police to remove squatters from a person's home, and police can enforce criminal trespassing charges against a squatter.

Pritzker signed the bill in July after squatters moved into a home next door to Rep. Marcus Evans in Chicago. According to ABC-7, Chicago Police told homeowners they couldn't remove

the squatters from the home and the homeowners would have to go through the eviction process in Cook County court, which can take months.

Drinking water protections

Senate Bill 1723 bans carbon sequestration — the process of capturing and storing carbon by injecting it underground — within an area that "overlies, underlies, or passes through" a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency-designated sole-source aquifer.

The new law applies to the footprint of the Mahomet Aquifer, which is the main source of drinking water for more than 500,000 people across a 15-county area in central Illinois.

It comes as Illinois, especially downstate, is targeted for carbon sequestration projects due to the state's favorable geology and the availability of federal tax credits.

Studies, including those conducted by researchers at the University of Illinois, have found minimal risk to water sources from sequestration activity.

But the legislation was a priority for central Illinois community activists, environmental advocates and a bipartisan cadre of local lawmakers with zero risk tolerance due to the lack of a clear alternative water source if the aquifer were tainted. Cabello and Sosnowski voted no, and McCombie did not vote.

Safer gear for firefighters

Illinois will take first steps towards requiring safer gear for firefighters.

Under House Bill 2409, manufacturers of firefighter turnout gear starting in 2026 must provide written notice if their products contain PFAS, also known as "forever chemicals."

Numerous scientific studies have linked exposure to PFAS to an increased risk of developing various forms of cancer.

Manufacturers will be banned from selling turnout gear and personal protective equipment containing PFAS altogether starting on Jan. 1, 2027.

Lift-assist fees

House Bill 2336 allows municipalities or fire districts to charge assisted living facilities or nursing homes for calls to fire departments requesting help lifting a resident when it is not an emergency.

The bill was an initiative of the Illinois Municipal League, which argued the calls to fire departments for the nonemergency service are a burden on local governments and shift liabilities for injuries that happen during the process to fire departments rather than the facility.

Stadium funding

Senate Bill 2772 adds women's professional sports to the types of facilities the Illinois Sports Facilities Authority can oversee. Current law only allows the ISFA to oversee sports facilities for baseball, football and auto racing.

The bill is not designed to move any team's stadium proposals forward, though the Chicago Stars women's soccer team has previously been reported to be interested in building a new stadium with help from state funding.

continued on page 5

New Laws

from page 4

The bill was the only one related to sports stadium funding that advanced in Springfield in 2025. The Chicago Bears committed earlier this year to building a stadium in Arlington Heights but are still waiting for approval from the village and struggling to find support in Springfield for funding.

Public official privacy

House Bill 576 allows state lawmakers, constitutional officers and state's attorneys, among others, to request that their personal information be redacted on public websites.

Public officials would be able to use their campaign funds to pay for personal security services and security upgrades to their home, including security systems, cameras, walls, fences and other physical improvements. Chesney voted no.

Rewilding

House Bill 2726 allows the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to implement rewilding as a conservation strategy for the state.

This could entail the restoration of land to its natural state and the reintroduction of native species, especially apex predators and keystone species like bison and beavers.

Illinois is believed to be the first state to codify the strategy into law. Chesney, Syverson, Cabello, McCombie and Sosnowski voted no.

Reservation app regulations

State lawmakers voted this year to crackdown on third-party restaurant reservation apps.

House Bill 2456 prohibits third-party reservation services from selling reservations without a restaurant's permission. Restaurants are still allowed to partner with the services.

Paid time off to pump breast milk

Senate Bill 212 mandates employers to compensate mothers who take breaks at work to pump breast milk for up to a year after their child is born. The bill prohibits employers from requiring employees to use paid leave time for pumping. Cabello, McCombie and Sosnowski voted no, Chesney did not vote, and Syverson voted present.

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Naloxone in libraries

House Bill 1910 requires that libraries maintain a supply of opioid overdose medication, like naloxone. This drug is often administered through a nasal spray like Narcan. The law also requires that at least one staff member be trained to identify overdoses and administer the drug.

Police training on sexual assault

Senate Bill 1195, also known as Anna's Law, requires police officers in training to participate in trauma-informed programs, procedures and practices that are designed to reduce trauma for victims. The bill is named after Anna Williams, a suburban resident who brought the initiative to lawmakers following her own experience with a sexual assault investigation. The bill takes effect in January.

Predatory towing

Senate Bill 2040 gives the Illinois Commerce Commission new powers to punish predatory towing companies which sometimes tow cars under false pretenses only to charge drivers afterwards. The ICC-backed law allows the agency to revoke towing licenses, impound tow trucks and more.

Jerry Nowicki contributed to this story.

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Voter Rolls

from page 1

with federal requirements to keep its voter database updated and accurate, which includes scrubbing registrations of voters who have died or moved away from their listed address.

State officials, however, have responded that Illinois has a decentralized voter registration system in which local election authorities at the city and county level are responsible for maintaining their own voter databases.

The lawsuit names State Board of Elections executive director Bernadette Matthews as the defendant.

A spokesman for the board said it has asked Attorney General Kwame Raoul's office for representation in the case. The agency declined to offer any further comment.

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Staunton Restaurant Owner Headed for Deportation

Attorney says attempts to stay deportation action rejected

Beth Hundsorfer Capitol News Illinois

Staunton, Illinois restaurateur Ismael Ayuso is preparing for his deportation to Mexico — a country he left decades ago and where his attorney said he is afraid to return because of cartel violence, citing, in part, his cousin's murder at the hands of drug traffickers.

Ayuso, 41, was moved to Greene County Jail in Springfield, Missouri, last week after a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officer rejected Ayuso's claim of reasonable fear and an immigration judge concurred, according to Marleen Suarez, Ayuso's attorney.

A Capitol News Illinois request to ICE for Ayuso's status was not immediately returned.

Suarez argued that Ayuso would face physical harm by drug traffickers, known as "Narcos" or "The Cartel," if he returned to Mexico.

"Ayuso stated that Narcos would target him because he has been in the United States and was recently deported to Mexico. They would assume he has money or access to money in the U.S. and would extort payment from under the threat of harm, death or being 'disappeared,'" she stated in her memorandum in support of a finding of reasonable fear.

His return may also put his two daughters, who are minors and U.S. citizens, at risk if they choose to join him in his hometown of Santa Ana near the Mexican border. He further stated in the document that his female cousin was "grabbed" by drug traffickers.

"She did not have what they wanted (probably money), and they cut her leg and killed her," according to Suarez's memorandum.

No further details were provided in the filing.

The hearing officer rejected those claims. That ruling was upheld by an immigration judge last week. With the rejection of his claims of reasonable fear, Suarez said it is likely that after six weeks of detention, Ayuso's deportation is imminent.

On Monday December 29, Ayuso was not listed on ICE's locator website.

Ayuso's deportation

The morning of Oct. 29 was a typical morning by a relative's account, with Ayuso making a trip to the gym, then an errand for his wife to transport a forgotten power cord to his daughter's school. ICE agents picked up Ayuso blocks away from Staunton's elementary school.

Ayuso's detention sparked outrage within the Macoupin County town of about 5,000 people where Ayuso operated Caldera Bar and Grill on Main Street. His neighbors claimed he worked hard, supported community causes and was active in his daughters' school.

"It has been an honor representing Mr. Ayuso Sandoval through this process. He is *continued on page 7*

6 January 6, 2026 *The Boone County Journal*

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF
THE SEVENTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS
U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, Plaintiff,
-v.-
2023FC74
PAMELA J. BOHLMAN et al, Defendant

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PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on January 16, 2024, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 1:00 PM on January 20, 2026, at the Advocus National Title Insurance, 530 S. State, Suite 201, (Logan Avenue entrance), Belvidere, IL, 61008, sell at public in-person sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate:

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Property Index No. 05-26-406-018

The real estate is improved with a residence.

Sale terms: If sold to anyone other than the Plaintiff, 25% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the sale payable to The Judicial Sales Corporation. No third party checks will be accepted. The balance, in certified funds/or wire transfer, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. 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 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.

You will need a photo identification issued by a government agency (driver's license, passport, etc.) in order to gain entry into our building and the foreclosure sale room in Cook County and the same identification for sales held at other county venues where The Judicial Sales Corporation conducts foreclosure sales.

For information, examine the court file, CODILIS & ASSOCIATES, P.C. Plaintiff's Attorneys, 15W030 NORTH FRONTAGE ROAD, SUITE 100, BURR RIDGE, IL, 60527 (630) 794-9876

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You can also visit The Judicial Sales Corporation at www.tjsc.com for a 7 day status report of pending sales.

CODILIS & ASSOCIATES, P.C.

15W030 NORTH FRONTAGE ROAD, SUITE 100

BURR RIDGE IL, 60527

630-794-5300

E-Mail: pleadings@l.cslegal.com

Attorney File No. 14-23-05937

Attorney ARDC No. 00468002

Case Number: 2023FC74

TJSC#: 45-3104

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.

Case # 2023FC74

13278645

Published in The Boone County Journal Dec 23, 30, Jan 6

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

M&T BANK, Plaintiff,
-v.-
2024FC52
OCTAVIA A WILLIAMS A/K/A OCTAVIA ANGELLE MCCALLA; AMERICAN EXPRESS NATIONAL BANK; GLEN ABBEY TRACE OWNERS ASSOCIATION, Defendants.

220 Glen Abbey Drive, Rockford, IL 61107

NOTICE OF SALE PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on 10/14/2025, an agent of Auction.com, LLC will conduct the Online Only auction at www.auction.com, with the bidding window opening on January 19, 2026 at 10:00 AM CDT and closing on 1/21/2026 at 10:00 AM subject to extension, and will sell at public sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate.

LOT ONE (1) AS DESIGNATED UPON THE PLAT OF GLEN ABEY TRACE, BEING A SUBDIVISION OF PART OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER (1/4) OF SECTION 7, TOWNSHIP 44 NORTH, RANGE 3 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, RECORDED SEPTEMBER 16, 1988 AS DOCUMENT NO. 88-3512 IN THE RECORDERS OFFICE OF BOONE COUNTY; SITUATED IN THE COUNTY OF BOONE AND STATE OF ILLINOIS.

Commonly known as 220 Glen Abbey Drive, Rockford, IL 61107

Property Index No. 05-07-301-014

The real estate is improved with a Single Family Residence. The judgment amount was \$398,229.67 Sale Terms: Full Sale Terms are available on the property page at www.auction.com by entering 220 Glen Abbey Drive into the search bar. If sold to anyone other than the Plaintiff, the winning bidder must pay the full bid amount within twenty-four (24) hours of the auction's end. All payments must be certified funds. No third-party checks will be accepted. All bidders will need to register at www.auction.com prior to placing a bid. 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 condo-

minum 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: McCalla Raymer Leibert Pierce, LLP (312) 346-9088 please refer to file number 24-19188IL. Auction.com, LLC 100 N LaSalle St., Suite 1400, Chicago, IL 60602 - 872-225-4985 You can also visit www.auction.com. Attorney File No. 24-19188IL Case Number: 2024FC52 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.

13278958

Published in The Boone County Journal Dec 23, 30, 2025; Jan 6, 2026

NOTICE OF SALE OF SCHOOL DISTRICT PROPERTY

Notice is hereby given that the Board of Education of Belvidere Community Unit School District 100, Boone County, Illinois ("School District") will sell the following described real estate:

7133 Garden Prairie Road, Garden Prairie, Illinois 61038 (PIN 06-25-300-020)

Legal Description: 25-44-4 W 528 OF N 550.5 OF S 930' 7133 GARDEN PRAIRIE RD

At public sale by taking sealed bids, which shall be accepted until 3:00 p.m. on January 23, 2026, at the School District's Central Office located at 1201 5th Ave, Belvidere, IL 61008. All bids must be clearly marked on the outside "Property Bid for 7133 Garden Prairie Road". All bids shall subsequently be opened by the School District at 3:15 p.m. on January 23, 2026, at its Central Office.

The award of a bid, if any, by the School District will be to the bidder that provides the highest bid (and which must exceed the minimum selling price of \$750,000.00) and agrees to comply with all of the terms contained in the Terms and Conditions document on file with the School District's Superintendent (or her designee). The School District reserves the right to reject any and all bids in its sole discretion. Please note that the real estate is subject to a lease that expires on July 31, 2026.

The completed bid package, including the terms and Conditions document, is on file with and available at the School District's Central Office, during regular office hours and on the District website (www.district100.com). Arrangements to obtain the bid package and/or to view the property may be made by emailing Jo Ann Armstrong, Chief Financial and Operations Officer, at jarmstrong@district100.com.

Board of Education of

Belvidere Community Unit School District 100,

Boone County, Illinois

Holly Houk

Board Clerk

Dated: December 15, 2025

Published in The Boone County Journal Dec 30, Jan 6 and 13, 2025

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

In the Matter of the Estate of CHAD MATTHEW BERTRAND,
Deceased

CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given of the death of CHAD MATTHEW BERTRAND of Belvidere, Illinois. Letters of Office were issued on December 18, 2025, to AMY B. BERTRAND of Belvidere, Illinois, whose attorney is Timothy J. Leake, Allen Galluzzo Hevrin Leake, LLC, 839 North Perryville Road, Suite 200, Rockford, Illinois 61107.

Claims against the estate may be filed on or before 20, that date being at least six (6) month from the date of first publication, or within three (3) months from the date of mailing or delivery of Notice to Creditors, if mailing or delivery 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 against the estate may be filed in the office of the clerk of the Circuit Court at the Boone County Courthouse, Probate Division, 601 North Main Street, Belvidere, Illinois 61008, or with the estate legal representatives, or both.

Copies of claims filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the estate legal representatives and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

AMY B. BERTRAND, Executor for the Estate of CHAD MATTHEW BERTRAND, Deceased

By: ALLEN GALLUZZO HEVRIN LEAKE, LLC

By: One of their Attorneys

PREPARED BY:

ALLEN GALLUZZO HEVRIN LEAKE, LLC

Timothy J. Leake, ARDC #6277868

839 North Perryville Road, Suite 200

Rockford, Illinois 61107

(815) 414-5522

Attorneys for the Estate

Published in The Boone County Journal Jan 6 13, 20, 2025

LEGAL NOTICE

The Boone County Highway Department will receive bids for new Roadway Barricade Equipment, at the County Highway Department office located at 9759 Illinois Route 76 Belvidere, IL 61008 until 2:00 PM on February 2, 2026. The bids will be opened publicly and read at this time.

Bid specifications and requirements may be obtained at the Boone County Highway Department office, contact Justin Krohn at jkrohn@boonecountyil.gov

The County Board reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids and waive technicalities.

Published in The Boone County Journal Jan 6, 2025

NOTICE

Belvidere Community Unit School District #100 is seeking bids for Wellness Center Building Renovations Bid Package #01.

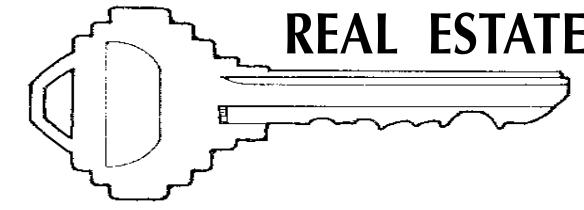
A mandatory pre bid contractor site walk through will be held at the project site on Tuesday January 13th, 2026 at 10:00am. Failure to attend mandatory pre bid contractor site walk through will result in bid proposal disqualification. Site is located at 1414 North State Street, Belvidere, IL 61008.

All bids are due by Tuesday January 27th, 2026, 2:00 pm and a public bid opening will take place at 2:30 pm the same day at the Administrative Building - Staff Development Room, 1201 5th Avenue, Belvidere, IL 61008. All vendors are welcome to attend the bid request opening.

All bids should be submitted through SECURE BIDS. Link to CUSD 100 website with SECURE BIDS <https://collbsecurebids.com/> agency/bcud100.

Proposal specifications will be available through the SECURE BIDS website. If you have any questions please contact the District Office at 815-544-8616 or via email at Purchasing@District100.com.

The Board of Education reserves the right to reject any and all bids.
Holly Houk
Clerk
Board of Education
Published in The Boone County Journal Jan 6, 2025



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

M&T BANK, Plaintiff,
-v.-
2024FC52
OCTAVIA A WILLIAMS A/K/A OCTAVIA ANGELLE MCCALLA; AMERICAN EXPRESS NATIONAL BANK; GLEN ABBEY TRACE OWNERS ASSOCIATION, Defendants.

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13278958

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E-Mail: pleadings@il.cslegal.com

Attorney File No. 14-23-05937

Attorney ARDC No. 00468002

Case Number: 2023FC74

TJSC#: 45-3104

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Case # 2023FC74

13278645

Published in The Boone County Journal Dec 23, 30, Jan 6

Deportation

from page 5

a successful businessman, devoted father and valued community member. He has been trying to navigate the complex immigration system in the U.S. to obtain a visa and remain here with his family," Suarez said.

The weekend after his arrest, hundreds of protestors turned out at a park on Staunton's Main Street to oppose ICE's actions.

Ayuso's detention also sparked an inquiry into a staffer for Sen. Tammy Duckworth. ICE Acting Director Todd Lyons sent a letter to Duckworth's office, claiming one of her staff members misrepresented himself as an attorney to get access to Ayuso and falsified a federal document.

Duckworth denied any knowledge of her staffer's actions, then terminated his employment.

Lyons' letter stated Ayuso is a "40-year-old

criminal illegal alien from Mexico" who has been removed from the country four times and has been convicted of driving under the influence.

"He was issued a final order of removal more than 20 years ago, in 2003," the letter stated.

Ayuso was charged with driving under the influence in St. Clair County in 2008. In exchange for pleading guilty, paying a fine, completing classes and community service, the conviction was not entered on his record.

"While his visa application was pending, he was torn away from his family community and business. It is hard to understand how his deportation benefits the U.S." Suarez said. "This is the type of immigrant that we should be welcoming with open arms."

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.

The Boone County Journal January 6, 2026 7

crease in education funding, it's coming at a time there's a lot of other fiscal pressures on state government," Sanders said. "So we're keeping that in mind in our preparation."

Sanders' comments came after the board heard a briefing on the state's financial outlook for the year ahead as well as summary of all the requests the agency has received for increased funding.

For the current fiscal year, spending on elementary and secondary education is expected to total just under \$11.2 billion, or about 20% of the state's entire \$55.1 billion General Revenue Fund Budget.

Officials from the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability, the nonpartisan fiscal staff of the General Assembly, told the board that economists are expecting weak job growth in the year ahead. They said that's due in part to economic disruptions brought on by President Donald Trump's tariff policy.

They also said lower interest rates could result in reduced revenue for the state. And there is great uncertainty about how much money the state can expect to receive from the federal government due to changes in federal budget policies.

"So, the bottom line overall is that without notable growth expected in the state's primary resources, and with no significant one-time revenue streams on the horizon, ... a relatively stagnant revenue outlook probably should be anticipated this fiscal year," COGFA's revenue manager Eric Noggle said. "So it's not the best news for fiscal year '27."

Education funding in Illinois

Under the Evidence-Based Funding plan that lawmakers passed in 2017, K-12 education spending is supposed to increase by at least \$350 million each year, with the new money targeted to the most underfunded school districts. That includes \$300 million for direct educational expenses and \$50 million for property tax relief grants in high-tax districts.

But the K-12 education budget also includes funding for costs outside the EBF formula, known as "mandated categorical" expenses. Those include transportation costs, special education expenses and funding for the state's free lunch and breakfast program.

Due to budget limitations, for the last several years the state has funded only a prorated portion of those costs, leaving local school districts to pay the remainder out of their own revenues.

For the current fiscal year, the state budgeted to spend \$1.17 billion for those mandated categorical expenses. But Andy Krupin, ISBE's director of funding and disbursements, said preliminary estimates show it will take an additional \$151.5 million next year just to keep the state's prorated percentage of funding the same.

Wednesday's briefings were just a preview of the official budget request that Sanders will present to the board at its next meeting Jan. 14. That request will be submitted to Gov. JB Pritzker, who will take it into consideration as he prepares an overall budget proposal that he will submit to the General Assembly in February.

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