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Walmart Selects Belvidere for Distribution Center

Staff report from Press Release

On Tuesday, June 20, Walmart announced plans to build a 1.2 million square-foot high-tech perishable goods distribution center in Belvidere. This center would handle fresh produce, eggs, dairy, flowers, and frozen goods for delivery to nearby Walmart stores. Locally, Walmart currently operates a retail Supercenter in Belvidere, which sells groceries, general merchandise, and a pharmacy at 2101 Gateway Center Drive.

The new distribution center would be located on Town Hall Road immediately north of US 20 and the sprawling Stellantis Belvidere Assembly Plant. Completion of the new facility is scheduled for 2027.

Boone County officials have been working with the Illinois Department of Transportation over relocating Illinois Route 76 from a proposed roundabout at the current junction of Route 76 and Woodstock Road along a new alignment that would follow Town Hall Road south to US 20.

Walmart is expected to invest over \$1.2 billion in the distribution center, which will bring 450 permanent jobs to the area, as well as construction employment. Local taxing bodies are in the process of modifying the Belvidere-Boone Enterprise Program. Under this program, this project will be eligible for 50% fee reduction for building permits, building materials sales tax exemptions, property tax abatements, and an investment tax credit.

“The City of Belvidere is excited that Walmart has decided to invest in our community and build their 1.2 million-square-foot distribution storage facility here,” said Belvidere Mayor Clint Morris. “Walmart’s investment supports our commitment to attract business development and job opportunity and represents a huge success for Belvidere in achieving both.”

Pamela Fettes, Executive Director of Growth Dimensions states that “Growth Dimensions Economic Development is ecstatic that Walmart has chosen Belvidere-Boone County for their 1.2 million-square-foot perishable distribution center. We are grateful for Walmart’s investment and the economic impact in Northern Illinois. We look forward to this partnership in years to come.”

Walmart announced its first high-tech perishable goods distribution center in 2018. The speed and efficiency of the systems used in high-tech perishable goods distribution centers, such as the one planned for Belvidere enable the facility to move double the amount of merchandise as compared to a traditional perishable distribution center. Rather than manually stacking boxes and building pallets,



Belvidere Walmart

Staff Photo

the new facility will allow workers to use technology to do the heavy lifting by helping them build more flexible, dense pallets and fit more products onto trucks. These technical improvements also reduce transportation costs, resulting in savings that can be passed on to customers.

“Belvidere Perishable Goods Distribution Center associates will work with cutting-edge technology to stack boxes in a way that not only makes the job less physically demanding, but also avoids damaging products by placing fragile items like eggs at the top. It also maximizes space on trucks so that we can make fewer trips,” said Prathibha Rajashekhar, senior vice president of Innovation & Automation at Walmart U.S. “The end result is getting high quality grocery items like dairy and fresh produce onto our store shelves and in the hands of our customers faster than ever before.”

“Walmart’s investment in technology and high-tech distribution centers paves the way for lasting careers,” said Maren Waggoner, senior vice president of Operations People Partner at Walmart U.S. “Associates who work at the facility will be building skillsets that reflect the modern era of retail, creating new opportunities for career development and lasting growth with Walmart.”

Full-time employees qualify for Walmart’s total rewards and benefits plans, including medical, vision and dental insurance, 401(k) matching, paid time off, stock purchase plan and access to a tuition-paid college degree.

Walmart currently operates seven distribution centers, 184 retail stores, and employs 57,800 associates in the state of Illinois. Globally, the company had fiscal year 2023 revenue of \$611 billion and employed approximately 2.1 million employees worldwide with more than 10,500 stores in 20 countries.

Stalled Bills Include Repeal of Subminimum Wage For Disabled

Several measure could be revived in legislature’s fall veto session

By Capitol News Illinois

While hundreds of bills cleared the General Assembly in the final month of the legislative session, some big-ticket measures will have to wait until at least the fall.

Sponsors of several stalled bills say they will consider reviving their proposals when lawmakers return to the Capitol in October and November for their annual veto session. Below is a look at some of the bills that didn’t pass in the regular session and whether they’re likely to come back up for a vote.

Subminimum wage: State Rep. Theresa Mah, D-Chicago, led a late push to prohibit Illinois businesses from participating in a federal program that allows them to pay individuals with disabilities below the minimum wage. It came just short of passing, although Mah says she has the votes to pass it in the fall.

The measure would have set a July 1, 2027, end date for Illinois businesses to participate in the subminimum wage program under the federal Fair Labor Standards Act. That program allows employers of individuals with disabilities to obtain a certificate allowing them to pay less than the state and federal minimum wage. Advocates say a review of state records shows some certificate holders have paid wages lower than \$1 per hour.

According to the Illinois Department of Human Services, there are about 4,000

Continued on Page 2

Legislation

from page 1

individuals employed under the program in Illinois and about 80 businesses have received certificates. Once the program ends, those workers would be subject to the statewide minimum wage.

The measure would also create a transition grant fund to support employer wage subsidies and other efforts to ensure a smooth transition and continued employment for disabled individuals.

Mah said the bill represented an agreement between IDHS and a trade group representing facilities that employ disabled individuals that was finalized late in the legislative process. But due to the crazed pace of the final week of session and attendance issues on the House floor,

Mah said the measure fell just short of the 60 votes needed to pass.

“We kind of ran out of time during the last three days of session,” Mah told Capitol News Illinois.

She said while she has the votes to pass the measure in the veto session, the effective dates of some of the bill’s provisions might have to be pushed back due to a constitutional requirement that a bill must pass with three-fifths majorities to have an immediate effective date after May 31.

Mah initially pushed for ending subminimum wage for disabled individuals in 2019, an effort advocates said would help Illinois “get right with history.” It stalled that year but again gained steam after Gov. JB Pritzker signed an executive order in October 2021 preventing the state from entering into contracts with entities that pay disabled workers less than the minimum wage.

The bill’s proponents noted the 2027 end date would create a four-year window for an existing state task force to determine the best path forward for distributing subsidies from the grant fund and minimizing disruption for employed individuals. The bill would expand that task force to add more representatives of disability care providers affected by the end of subminimum wage.

It also would increase a state- and federal-funded “personal needs allowance” for individuals living in a Community Integrated Living Arrangement to \$100 from \$60 monthly.

Biometric privacy: Another stalled measure would have made changes to the state’s Biometric Information Privacy Act, a 2008 law that allows individuals to sue companies over improper collection or storage of information such as fingerprints or facial scans.

Senate Democrats filed language to alter BIPA in an amendment to House Bill 3811 on what was scheduled to be the final day of the spring session before it was extended, immediately drawing criticisms from business groups.

In the last five years, upwards of 2,000 lawsuits have been filed under BIPA, followed by several high-dollar settlements. Those legal developments, in addition to a series of Illinois Supreme Court decisions interpreting BIPA’s limits in ways that favor aggrieved parties, have worried the business community.

Fast food chain White Castle, the defendant in

one of the two BIPA-related cases decided by the state’s high court in February, claims the court’s ruling could cost the company \$17 billion – a figure that businesses warn could bankrupt entire industries. The court in that case found that claims could accrue for each violation of BIPA, meaning every individual finger or facial scan would constitute a separate violation of the law.

The opinion did, however, “respectfully suggest” the General Assembly review BIPA “and make clear its intent regarding the assessment of damages under the Act.”

In response, the late-session amendment would have stipulated that “the same biometric identifier from the same person using the same method of collection has created a single violation,” but business groups said the language was too vague.

They also assailed the proposed fine increase for negligent violations from \$1,000 to \$1,500 and decried the addition of another type of biometric data to the law – electronic signatures – as a giveaway to trial lawyers.

After business groups balked at the proposal, Senate Democratic leaders agreed to hold off on the bill pending further negotiations, meaning the high court’s suggestions will go unheeded at least until the fall veto session.

Human composting: House Bill 3158 would have legalized and regulated “natural organic reduction,” a process also known as human composting or terramation in which human remains are rapidly decomposed into compost.

The process turns human remains into dirt over the course of several weeks by heating a person’s remains in a vessel with wood chips, straw and other organic material to accelerate the growth of microbes that break down the body. This is distinct from “natural burial,” in which a body is buried with no casket or in a biodegradable container.

The measure passed the House 63-38 on March 24 and was later discussed in a subject matter hearing in the Senate. But it never received a committee vote or consideration by the full Senate.

Bill sponsor Rep. Kelly Cassidy, D-Chicago, said she will continue to push for its passage, but she did not have a specific timeline for when it may be considered.

“We had been working on the bill in the House for a couple of years, so folks were a little more familiar with it,” she said in an email statement. “This is a whole new topic for the Senate, and between that unfamiliarity and the

Continued on Page 3

Quidnunc



More Warehouse work for Belvidere Congratulations

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

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Legislation

from page 2

dishonest arguments of the opposition, we need to spend time having those direct conversations with members of that chamber and get their questions answered.”

Cannabis car search: Senate Bill 125 would have ensured that the smell of “burnt or raw cannabis in a motor vehicle” cannot alone be probable cause for an individual’s vehicle to be searched if the driver is 21 years of age or older.

The measure passed 33-20 in the Senate on March 30 but faced opposition from law enforcement groups and never came to a vote in the House.

Sen. Rachel Ventura, D-Joliet, said the measure may be revisited in the fall veto session with other cannabis-related measures, but multiple pending state court cases are already centered on the issue, so it might not need to be decided by the legislature.

The Illinois Supreme Court has agreed to hear three cases pertaining to the issue, with two of the cases being consolidated. Two of the cases out of the 3rd District Appellate Court ruled that the smell of cannabis cannot alone be probable cause to pull a vehicle over. The 4th District Appellate Court came to the opposite ruling.

“We’re allowing the courts to take their view on it,” Ventura said.

Ventura said she’s hoping the Illinois Supreme Court rules in favor of protecting against searches based on the smell of cannabis, but she’s willing to bring the bill back in the fall if needed.

“I’m hoping not to go that route. I’m very hopeful that the courts will rule in the direction of the 3rd (District) Appellate Court,” Ventura said.

Corruption convictions: House Bill 351 would have barred anyone convicted of a felony, bribery, perjury or misuse of public funds while serving as a public official from ever being elected to a state or local office again.

The bill would have allowed exceptions for people whose convictions have been reversed or pardoned, or if they’ve received a restoration of rights. It also calls for setting up a task force to review current policies and make

recommendations for disqualifying offenses.

Current law bars anyone convicted of a felony from holding a state office until they’ve completed their sentence and a provision of the Illinois Municipal Code bars anyone who has ever been convicted of a felony from holding an elected municipal office. But those people are free to run for the General Assembly, governor or any other constitutional office once they’ve completed their sentence.

While the measure passed unanimously in the House and cleared Senate committee 12-0, it never received a vote in the full Senate.

A spokesperson for Senate President Don Harmon, D-Oak Park, who sponsored the bill in the Senate, said he plans to call it for a vote in the veto session.

Government electric vehicles: Senate Bill 1769 would have required all passenger vehicles purchased by the state to be “zero-emission” by 2030, meaning they produce no greenhouse gases. The bill exempts law enforcement vehicles and vehicles bought by the Department of Transportation as part of a consolidated procurement.

It initially passed the Senate in mid-May on a 33-20 vote but was later amended in the House, passing 69-35 on May 25. It never came back to the Senate for a final vote.

“I’m being told this will be heard in veto session,” Ventura said, noting that her discussions with legislative staff are ongoing.

‘Rainy day’ fund: Comptroller Susana Mendoza pushed for House Bill 2515, a bill requiring automatic deposits in the “rainy day” and pension stabilization funds when revenue projections exceed the prior year’s estimate by at least 4 percent and the state has less than \$3 billion in bills awaiting payment.

While that bill cleared a House committee unanimously in March, it never came to a vote in either chamber. Mendoza’s office said she would continue to push for the measure.

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OP-ED

History is One Thing, But Who Do You Respect

By Scott Reeder

When I was in high school, my Grandma Wanda fought a battle with the American Legion to have a veteran’s marker placed on the grave of her husband’s grandfather.

Eventually, the Legion post relented and put a veteran’s stone over John Beckerdite’s earthly remains. What gave the veteran’s organization pause is that John hadn’t served in any branch of the United States Armed Forces. He fought for the Confederacy.

“Although he fought for the South, he fought for his country,” Grandma wrote in a family history.

When she wrote that, I was about 14 years old. I thought it was nonsense then. And I think it even more so today. My forbear didn’t fight for his country, he betrayed it. And, no, he didn’t battle for freedom, he fought for slavery.

When I made these points to Grandma, she wouldn’t hear of it. She had bought into the myth of the Lost Cause.

I was thinking of that long ago argument this past week, as the U.S. armed forces began renaming military bases that had been named after Confederate generals.

For example, Fort Bragg will become Fort Liberty. Fort Hood will become Fort Cavazos. Fort Benning will become Fort Moore. And Fort Gordon will become Fort Eisenhower.

Some traditionalists are hopping mad about the change. They say the Biden administration is erasing history.

Baloney.

The administration is eradicating the remnants of a fable.

It’s the myth that the Southerners fought a noble fight for independence. They will tell you – with a straight face – the Civil War was fought not over slavery but state’s rights.

It’s just not true. All 11 Southern states said in their individual articles of secession that they were departing the Union over the issue of slavery.

One Southern friend concedes that the South may have left the Union over slavery. But he adds the North didn’t fight the war to end slavery.

Well, I guess you can ignore the Emancipation Proclamation or Abraham Lincoln’s moral opposition to slavery, but what about this line

from the “Battle of the Republic” that Union soldiers sang marching into battle: “As Christ died to make men holy, let us die to make men free?”

Whose freedom do you think they were dying for?

No one wants to believe their ancestors died and sacrificed for something as reprehensible as the right to own another human being. But men like Braxton Bragg, John Bell Hood, Henry Benning and John

Continued on Page 5

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Garden Program Series Continues

How's your garden growing? By now you more than likely have everything planted and are ready to watch it all grow. You may begin noticing pests in your garden or wondering how you can extend your garden through the fall. University of Illinois Extension Boone County Master Gardeners will address these types of concerns and questions as they continue their "Grow Your Own Food" Garden Series with three more programs coming up.

July 13: What's Bugging My Garden? Not sure what is bugging your garden? Learn about the common pests and diseases that affect your garden plants and produce and the best practices to manage them. Master Gardener, Bobbi Burke, will be leading this presentation.

August 3: Preserving Herbs Seasoning is the spice of life. Let's preserve our home-grown herbs. Master Gardeners Maddy Paulson and Minoo Hagshenas, will share how to grow, harvest, and preserve your herbs so that they can be enjoyed throughout the season. September 7: End of Season Gardening Seed saving, garden cleanup and kitchen scrap gardening are all tasks that when done right can prepare your garden space for the next growing season or extend your current garden. Master Gardener, Jennifer Crider, will share tips on how to save and store seeds from the veggies in your garden, proper tasks for fall garden cleanup and touch on kitchen scrap gardening.

All sessions will be held at the Boone County Extension office located at 205 Cadillac Ct., Suite 5 in Belvidere at 6 p.m. The cost is \$5 per person, per session. Space is limited. Advanced registration is encouraged so that we can make sure we have enough material.

If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in these programs, please contact Judy Hodge, Program Coordinator at hodg@illinois.edu or 815-544-3710. Early requests are strongly encouraged to allow time to meet your needs.

The Bureau of Land Management is Holding a Wild Horse And Burro Placement Event

On July 7-8, 2023, the Bureau will be offering approximately 30 excess animals gathered from western rangelands at the Prairie Rose Arena, 11045 NE 56th Street, Elkhart, Iowa.

"More than 50,000 wild horses and burros are cared for in off-range facilities, including nearly 40,000 wild horses located on off-range pastures," said Northeastern States District Manager Stephanie Carman. "Adopting a wild horse or burro is a chance to care for, and then own, a part of America's heritage."

Adoptions and sales will be held by appointment only from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. CDT on Friday, July 7, and from 8 a.m. – 1 p.m. CDT on Saturday, July 8. On both days, placements will occur in one-hour increments (five appointments per hour). Appointments can be made via email at BLM_ES_NSDO_WHB@blm.gov. The BLM requests all potential buyers and adopters to disclose their top three preferred time slots when making appointments.

The BLM's Adoption Incentive Program was

designed to help improve rangeland health in overpopulated herd management areas in the western states and to save taxpayer costs for animals held at off-range holding facilities. Through this program, qualified adopters are eligible to receive \$1000 after one year of issuance of the certificate of title for an untrained wild horse or burro. The incentive is available for all untrained animals eligible for adoption with an adoption fee of \$125 per animal.

Animals that are over 10 years old or younger animals who were unsuccessfully adopted out to new homes three times may be sold. BLM staff will be available to identify these animals to interested, qualified buyers. Purchasers will receive immediate ownership of the animals.

To learn more about BLM's Wild Horse and Burro program, visit <https://www.blm.gov/whb>.

Jury Convicts Politically Connected Businessman for Bribing Pair of Lawmakers

James Weiss found guilty on all seven counts of bribery, lying to FBI

By Hannah Meisel Capitol News Illinois

It wasn't quite "where's the beef?" but when he stepped outside a suburban Wendy's with a fellow lawmaker on a hot August morning in 2019, then-state Sen. Terry Link asked a question to the same effect as the fast-food giant's former slogan.

"What's in it for me, though?" Link asked then-state Rep. Luis Arroyo, who had been pitching him – once again – on sponsoring legislation to regulate so-called sweepstakes machines, a legally murky form of gambling.

The answer to that question became central to the federal government's case against politically connected businessman James Weiss, which ended Thursday with a jury convicting Weiss on seven counts, including bribery and lying to the FBI.

Federal sentencing guidelines dictate a maximum of 20 years in prison for the most serious of the charges, though those convicted of public corruption have faced wildly different sentences.

Weiss is married to former state Rep. Toni Berrios, D-Chicago, making him the son-in-law of longtime former Cook County Democratic Party boss Joe Berrios. Neither attended any of the seven-day trial.

Wearing a stony expression and a black suit, Weiss took occasional sips of water from a red plastic cup while Judge Steven Seeger read the guilty verdicts on Thursday afternoon. The jury deliberated for about four hours after hearing the last bit of closing arguments in the morning, following roughly four days of testimony from 13 witnesses – including Link.

Before dismissing the parties, Seeger scheduled Weiss' sentencing for Oct. 11.

'A scheme already underway'

In September 2018, Weiss founded a sweepstakes machine company called Collage LLC and promptly set to work on changing state laws to fully legalize the devices, which operate in a legal gray area in Illinois.

Part of that campaign included bringing on Arroyo to "consult" with him for \$2,500 per

month. While the defense said it was a legitimate business arrangement, the government called it a bribe – and the jury agreed.

"He can call it whatever he wants," Assistant U.S. Attorney Sean Franzblau told the jury during his closing arguments Wednesday. "He can call himself his consultant, his lobbyist, his dentist, his therapist – it doesn't matter. If you pay a public official money in exchange for an official act, it is a bribe."

Ten months into Arroyo's arrangement with Weiss, the two met Link for a meeting in a Highland Park Wendy's. It was there that Link asked Arroyo to step outside, and then asked the critical question. Though Link had assured his fellow Democrat that their conversation was "you and I talking," the 24-year veteran of Springfield had been wearing an FBI wire as part of a deal he'd cut a couple years earlier after being caught evading his taxes.

Arroyo answered Link's question in the Wendy's parking lot with an offer of "a monthly check, a monthly stipend" for Link or someone else of his choosing. And a few weeks later, Weiss cut the first of two \$2,500 checks for a "friend" of Link's named "Katherine Hunter."

But no such person ever existed; it was a name the FBI provided to Link an hour before his second meeting with Arroyo. Weiss drove Arroyo to a diner in Skokie, then stayed in the car while Arroyo went inside and handed Link a folder containing Weiss' business card, draft legislation to regulate sweepstakes machines, and a \$2,500 check from Collage LLC that Weiss had signed with the payee line left blank.

Arroyo is now 10 months into a 57-month prison sentence after he pleaded guilty to bribing Link. But Weiss has maintained his innocence.

Weiss' attorney, Ilia Usharovich, emphasized Weiss' absence from both key meetings between Link and Arroyo in which the bribe was arranged.

"They both hid it from Mr. Weiss," Usharovich said. "If they wanted Mr. Weiss to know about it, they would've had him at the table."

Usharovich also said the fact that Weiss paid the \$2,500 monthly consulting fees in checks is reason enough to doubt he was bribing Arroyo and Link.

"If Jimmy wanted to bribe these people, why wouldn't he just give them cash?" he asked the jury in his closing arguments. "Bribes come in cash because you don't want a record. You don't want to be sitting in federal court explaining."

The government attorneys, however, refuted that claim.

"Common sense dictates that when you send someone to meet an elected official at (the Skokie) restaurant with a blank check and legislation... you are paying a bribe," Franzblau told the jury. "It's not an accident...It's a continuation of a scheme already underway."

Speaking to reporters after the verdict, juror Abriana Sutherland-Scienski said the jury didn't buy Usharovich's attempt to separate Weiss from Arroyo's actions.

"It's pretty clear that Mr. Weiss was involved in every step of this process," she said. "There were some arguments that the defense made that I personally found insulting to our intelligence and to the court at large."

Sweepstakes machines

After partnering with Weiss, Arroyo promptly began pushing for pro-sweepstakes machine legislation in Springfield, according to testimony from Link and two lawmakers who'd been involved in gambling legislation around that time. State Rep. Bob Rita, D-Blue Island, characterized Arroyo's advocacy as "extreme,"

Continued on Page 5

Conviction

from page 4

and said he'd even started avoiding Arroyo.

After Link blew up at Arroyo as the clock was winding down on lawmakers' spring session in May of that year, the feds saw an opportunity to further Link's role as a cooperating witness. In mid-July, Link called Arroyo, apologized for telling him on the Senate floor to "get the f--- out of here" and suggested meeting to talk about sweepstakes legislation.

The meeting at the Highland Park Wendy's took place a couple weeks later, where Weiss made his case to Link for the legalization of sweepstakes machines – a close cousin of the heavily regulated video gaming terminals that have proliferated in Illinois in the last decade.

But unlike video gaming terminals, which require thousands of dollars in annual fees for licensing, sweepstakes machine operators only pay a \$30 annual fee to the Illinois Department of Revenue for a sticker. Sweepstakes machines proponents claim the devices fall under Illinois' Prizes and Gifts Act and shouldn't be treated as a type of gambling.

Due to the much lower barrier to entry, both Weiss and Arroyo told Link that sweepstakes machines help small businesses that either don't have liquor licenses or can't afford the license fees required to host state-regulated video gaming terminals.

Usharovich had tried to make the case that lawmakers like Link, Rita and former state Sen. Tony Munoz, who also testified in the case, were in the pocket of big video gaming companies and casinos, both of which want to ban sweepstakes machines outright. As a result, Usharovich claimed, it was in their best interest to block legislation to legalize sweepstakes machines.

But juror Sutherland-Scienski told reporters that the jury didn't find that argument compelling either.

"That didn't really seem super relevant to what Mr. Weiss did," she said.

The fictitious Katherine Hunter

When interviewed by FBI agents two months after Link and Arroyo's second meeting, Weiss claimed that Link had wanted Weiss to hire "Katherine Hunter" to lobby on behalf of Collage in Springfield. Weiss even said he'd once had a brief phone conversation with her.

"I knew Katherine Hunter. I had talked to her, or I thought it was her," Weiss told the agents while in the back of an FBI vehicle during a surprise interview in late October 2019. "I told you guys that I talked to her for two minutes."

According to Weiss, Arroyo had handed him his phone once while they were together at Tavern on Rush, a restaurant in downtown Chicago, and indicated it was Hunter wanting to talk to him about their consulting arrangement.

Weiss' attorney asked the jury to keep an open mind about coincidences.

"There's no proof to show that Mr. Weiss did not speak to what he believed to be a woman named Katherine," Usharovich said in his closing arguments.

Weiss would later have his assistant send a lobbying contract to Hunter, along with a second \$2,500 check. The items were sent to Link's P.O. box, which he'd long used to accept mail related to his political action committee. But Weiss claimed he didn't know it was Link's P.O. box, as it was the only address provided to him by Arroyo.

Both the contract and the check were made out to "Catherine Hunter" – spelled with a C instead of a K – a fact Usharovich used to sow doubt about Weiss' involvement in the alleged scheme. Earlier in trial, jurors heard a September 2019 wiretapped call in which Link reminded Arroyo that Katherine was spelled "with a K, not a C."

"That means Mr. Arroyo wasn't communicating with Mr. Weiss because the second check and the contract was made out to Catherine with a C," Usharovich said.

He claimed Weiss didn't know that Katherine Hunter was just a "pass-through" entity for Link to get paid, and cited Weiss' exclusion from the second meeting between Link and Arroyo.

"They both hid it from Mr. Weiss," Usharovich said. "If they wanted Mr. Weiss to know about it, they would've had him at the table."

Usharovich also built on the theme the defense introduced in their opening statement last week, insisting that it was actually the government that "created" the bribe by creating the fictitious "Katherine Hunter" and having Link solicit a bribe from Arroyo on her behalf.

The government's attorneys, however, pushed back on the notion that Link solicited a bribe; Link himself said he'd asked the question the feds suggested "in his own words," and that it was meant to be open-ended.

Franzblau told the jury that Arroyo could've offered Link anything – like support for one of his bills – or nothing. But instead, "Arroyo flipped into corruption mode," he said.

"Ladies and gentlemen, the government did not create the bribe," Franzblau said. "The FBI simply walked up to a corrupt scheme already in place, gave a little nudge, and another bribe came tumbling out."

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Respect

from page 3

Brown Gordon did just that.

It's shameful that our nation named its military bases after these and other traitors. And make no mistake about it, these men betrayed their country. They took up arms against a nation that they once pledged to serve.

Worse yet, they did it in support of an issue as abhorrent as slavery.

My father spent a miserable few months at Fort Gordon, where he went through Army basic training during the Korean War. He never spoke well of his time as a draftee. There was no nostalgia directed toward his time in the service.

But I can't help but think he would be pleased that the base where he suffered is now named after the first person he supported for president – Eisenhower.

Unlike, Gordon, who is believed to have headed the Georgia Ku Klux Klan, Ike fought for individual liberty. He and his troops defeated Nazism and liberated concentration camps. While president, he sent the 101st Airborne to Little Rock, Ark., to force the integration of public schools.

Those are actions worthy of praise.

And no, Eisenhower wasn't perfect. He made mistakes. But the thrust of his life's work was moving the nation in the right direction.

Some will say that renaming the bases is rewriting history. That's silly. What we are rewriting is who we choose to honor in our history.

The bases got their names as part of a political compromise. As the Army was expanding during World War I, it wanted to establish training bases in the South. To get local buy in, it allowed state legislatures to choose the names of the bases. Lawmakers – just 49 years after the Civil War – chose to name the bases after Confederate generals.

Please note, Southern African Americans couldn't vote during this era. They had no say over who was honored.

Illinoisans should be proud of our heritage. The two individuals most responsible for defeating secession and slavery – Abraham Lincoln and Ulysses S. Grant – both hailed from the Prairie State.

So why does the Civil War still divide us? The best answer is that we haven't come to terms with its causes. Race still divides our nation.

In 2017, we saw the deep divisions of the Civil War manifest themselves in Charlottesville, Va. where riots ensued after a statue of Robert E. Lee was to be taken down. Those who supported the statue remaining said it wasn't about race, but their heritage, which they contended was being marginalized.

But if it wasn't about race, why would neo-Nazis, Ku Klux Klan members and other white supremacists be there rioting?

We should be proud that our military has expunged the names of secessionists from their places of honor.

Scott Reeder, a staff writer for Illinois Times, can be reached at sreeder@illinoistimes.com.

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LEGAL NOTICES

STATE OF WISCONSIN :
CIRCUIT COURT : Dane COUNTY
John D. Baker as Trustee for the JOHN D. Baker LIVING TRUST
7270 State Road 69,
Belleville, WI 53508,
and
J&J HOLDINGS, LLC
7270 State Road 69,
Belleville, WI 53508,
Plaintiffs,
vs. Case No. 2023CV00778 Case Code: 30106
Jeffrey G. Petry AS TRUSTEE FOR THE Petry Trust No 1989
10905 Olson Road,
Belvidere, IL 61008,
1989 TR LLC a/k/a Petry Trust 1989 LLC,
10905 Olson Road,
Belvidere, IL 61008
Defendants.

PUBLICATION SUMMONS
THE STATE OF WISCONSIN
To Jeffrey G. Petry as Trustee for the Petry Trust No 1989 named
above as a Defendant:
You are hereby notified that Plaintiffs, named above, have filed a
lawsuit or other legal action against you.
Within forty (40) days after June 8, 2023, you must respond with a
written demand for a copy of the Complaint. The demand must be sent
or delivered to the court, whose address is: Clerk of Circuit Court, Dane
County Courthouse, 215 S. Hamilton St., Madison, WI 53703, and to
Attorneys Joseph D. Brydges, Tanya M. Salman, and Mason A. Higgins,
of Michael Best & Friedrich LLP, Plaintiffs' attorneys, whose address is
One South Pinckney Street, Suite 700, Madison, WI 53703-4257. You
may have an attorney help or represent you.
If you do not demand a copy of the Complaint within forty (40) days,
the Court may grant judgment against you for the aware of money or
other legal action requested in the Complaint, and you may lose your
right to object to anything that is or may be incorrect in the Complaint.
A judgment may be enforced as provided by law. A judgment awarding
money may become a lien against real estate you own now or in the
future, and may also be enforced by garnishment or seizure of property.

Dated: June 5, 2023
Michael Best & Friedrich LLP
By: Electronically signed by Tanya M. Salman
Joseph D. Brydges, SBN 1079318
jdbrydges@michaelbest.com
Tanya M. Salman, SBN 1089151
tmsalman@michaelbest.com
Mason A. Higgins, SBN 1124805
mahiggins@michaelbest.com
One South Pinckney Street, Suite 700
Madison, WI 53703
Phone: (608) 257-3501
Fax: (608) 283-2275
Attorneys for Plaintiffs
Published in The Boone County Journal June 8, 15, 22

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 17TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: MARIE K. SHOOK,
Deceased. CASE NO.: 2023 PR 27

CLAIM NOTICE
Notice is given of the death of Marie K. Shook. Letters of Office
were issued on June 6, 2023, to Terry A. Shook at 507 Commander Place,
Belvidere, IL 61008, who is the legal representative of the estate. The
attorney for the estate is James Hursh, Guyer & Enichen, P.C., 2601 Reid
Farm Road, Suite B, Rockford, IL 61114.
Claims against the estate may be filed on or before December 15,
2023, that date being at least six (6) months from the date of first publi-
cation, or within three (3) months from the date of mailing or delivery of
Notice to creditors, if mailing or delivery is required by Section 5/18-3 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 Boene
County Circuit Clerk, Probate Division, at the Boone County Court-
house, 601 N. Main Street, Belvidere, IL 61008, or with the estate's legal
representative, or both.
Copies of claims filed with the Circuit Clerk's Office, Probate Divi-
sion, must be mailed or delivered to the estate's legal representative and
to his/her attorney within ten days after it has been filed.

DATED: June 15, 2023
By: Guyer & Enichen, P.C.
By: /s/ James Hursh
Attorney for Terry A. Shook, Independent Executor
James Hursh, #6230997
Attorney for Estate
Guyer & Enichen, P.C.
2601 Reid Farm Road
Rockford, IL 61114
815.636.9600
jhursh@guyerlaw.com
Published in The Boone County Journal June 15, 22, 29

STATE OF ILLINOIS
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE
17TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
BOONE COUNTY
In the matter of the petition of Broderick Walker Sperry; Keagan Alexander
Hooks By Ashley Marissa Kuznicki Case No. 2023MR23
NOTICE OF FILING PETITION FOR NAME CHANGE OF MINOR
CHILDREN

Notice is hereby given, that on July 25, 2023, at 9:30 am, I will present
a Petition requesting that the Court change his/her present names of,
Broderick Walker Sperry; Keagan Alexander Hooks
minors, to the name of Broderick Walker Kuznicki; and Keagan
Alexander Kuznicki. The hearing will take place at the Boone County
Courthouse, 601 N. Main St., Belvidere, IL 61008.
Broderick Walker Sperry; Keagan Alexander Hooks, minors, by, Ashley
Marissa Kuznicki
Published in the Boone County Journal 06/ 15, 22, 29

TAX DEED NO: 2023-TX-20 FILED: 6/9/2023
To: Alberta Bogardus and all other persons/entities unknown having or
claiming any right title or interest in the real estate described below.
TAKE NOTICE

County of Boone
Date Premises Sold October 28, 2021
Certificate No. 2020-00063
Sold for General Taxes of (year) 2020
THIS PROPERTY HAS BEEN SOLD FOR DELINQUENT TAXES
Property located at Denny Road, Capron, Illinois
Legal Description or Property Index No. 04-27-300-001
This notice is to advise you that the above property has been sold
for delinquent taxes and that the period of redemption from the sale will
expire on October 28, 2023.
This notice is also to advise you that a petition has been filed for a tax
deed which will transfer title and the right to possession of this property
if redemption is not made on or before October 28, 2023.
This matter is set for hearing in the Circuit Court of this County in
Belvidere, Illinois on November 14, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. in Courtroom 3.
You may be present at this hearing but your right to redeem will already
have expired at that time.
YOU ARE URGED TO REDEEM IMMEDIATELY TO PREVENT
LOSS OF PROPERTY
Redemption can be made at any time on or before October 28, 2023
by applying to the County Clerk of Boone County, Illinois at the Office
of the County Clerk in Belvidere, Illinois.
For further information contact the County Clerk:
ADDRESS: Boone County Clerk's Office, 1212 Logan Ave., Room
103, Belvidere, IL 61008
TELEPHONE: 815-544-3103
Zurmavar, LLC XV, Petitioner
J. Thomas Witek
Witek Law Offices
7210 E. State #102
Rockford, IL 61108
(815) 962-9288
Published in The Boone County Journal June 22, 29, July 6 q

NOTICE TO BIDDERS
Sealed Proposals for the MFT Street Overlay Project in Belvidere,
Illinois will be received at the office of the City Clerk, 401 Whitney
Boulevard, Belvidere, Illinois 61008 until 10:00 A.M. local time on
Wednesday, July 5, 2023 and will be publicly opened and read at that
time.
Specifications and Proposal forms will be available in the office of the
Director of Public Works, 401 Whitney Boulevard, Suite 200, Belvidere,
Illinois 61008. Proposals will be issued only to those contractors who
present their IDOT Eligibility Certificate.
The City Council reserves the right to reject any or all Proposals and
to waive any technicalities.
This was published in The Boone County Journal - 06/22

NOTICE TO BIDDERS
Sealed Proposals for the MFT Thermoplastic Striping Project in
Belvidere, Illinois will be received at the office of the City Clerk, 401
Whitney Boulevard, Belvidere, Illinois until 10:00 A.M. local time on
Wednesday, July 5, 2023 and will be publicly opened and read at that
time.
Specifications and Proposal forms will be available in the office of
the Director of Public Works, 401 Whitney Boulevard, Suite 200,
Belvidere, Illinois 61008.
The City Council reserves the right to reject any or all Proposals and
to waive any technicalities.
This was published in The Boone County Journal - 06/22

STATE OF ILLINOIS
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 17TH
JUDICIAL CIRCUIT BOONE COUNTY
IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION OF Anastasia Cosette Finocchio
Case No. 2023MR21
By Antonia Maria Finocchio
NOTICE OF FILING PETITION FOR NAME CHANGE
OF MINOR CHILDREN
Notice is hereby given, that on August 1, 2023, at 9:00 am, I will
present a Petition requesting that the Court change his/her present name
of, Anastasia Cosette Finocchio,
minor, to the name of Antonio Samuel Dante Finocchio. The hearing
will take place at the Boone County Courthouse, 601 N. Main St.,
Belvidere, IL 61008.
Anastasia Cosette Finocchio, minor by, Antonia Maria Finocchio
Published in the Boone County Journal 06/ 22, 29 07/06

ASSUMED NAMES

STATE OF ILLINOIS COUNTY of BOONE COUNTY
ASSUMED NAME CERTIFICATE OF INTENTION
No. DBA4145 - The undersigned person(s) do hereby certify that a
CLEANING business is or is to be conducted or transacted under the
name of LAS FLORES CLEANING CREW LLC that its location is or
will be at 204 Warren 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: 815-520-4515
Liliana Flores, 204 Warren Avenue, Belvidere, IL 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:
Wednesday, June 7, 2023, Julie A Bliss, County Clerk and Recorder
Published in Boone County Journal 6/8, 6/15, 6/22 - P

STATE OF ILLINOIS COUNTY of BOONE COUNTY
ASSUMED NAME CERTIFICATE OF INTENTION
No. DBA4145 - The undersigned person(s) do hereby certify that a
COLLECTABLES business is or is to be conducted or transacted under
the name of SALLY'S DOLLS that its location is or will be at 7071 Blaine
Road 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: 815-569-2252
Sally Jeanne Dredske, 7071 Blaine Road, Poplar Grove, IL 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: Monday,
June 12, 2023, Julie A Bliss, County Clerk and Recorder
Published in Boone County Journal 6/15, 6/22, 6/29 - P

STATE OF ILLINOIS COUNTY of BOONE COUNTY
ASSUMED NAME CERTIFICATE OF INTENTION
No. DBA4153 - The undersigned person(s) do hereby certify that a
MOBILE TRUCK DETAILING business is or is to be conducted or
transacted under the name of ALL AMERICAN MOBILE TRUCK WASH
& DETAILING that its location is or will be at 317 White Oak Drive 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: 815-621-1188
Sean Burger, 317 White Oak Drive, Poplar Grove, IL 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: Friday,
June 9, 2023, Julie A Bliss, County Clerk and Recorder
Published in Boone County Journal 6/15, 6/22, 6/29 - P

STATE OF ILLINOIS COUNTY of BOONE COUNTY
ASSUMED NAME CERTIFICATE OF INTENTION
No. DBA4145 - The undersigned person(s) do hereby certify that a
HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING business is or is to be conducted or
transacted under the name of M&C HEATING AND COOLING that
its location is or will be at 226 Andrews Drive 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: 815-721-1696
Manuel Marquez, 226 Andrews Drive, Belvidere, IL 61008
Jose Camargo, 1301 West 6th Street, Belvidere, IL 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: Monday,
June 12, 2023, Julie A Bliss, County Clerk and Recorder
Published in Boone County Journal 6/15, 6/22, 6/29 - P

Health Care Workers Who Cover Up Patient Abuse Now Face Stiffer Penalties

The legislation, spurred by a news investigation, allows workers to be barred from health care jobs for obstructing investigations into staff misconduct

By Beth Hundsdorfer Capitol News Illinois & Molly Parker Lee Enterprises Midwest

This article was produced for ProPublica's Local Reporting Network in partnership with Lee Enterprises, along with Capitol News Illinois.

Gov. J.B. Pritzker signed a bill into law on Friday that strengthens the range of penalties that a state watchdog can mete out for health care employees who conspire to hide abuse or interfere with investigations by the state police or internal oversight bodies.

The legislation was introduced following an investigative series by Capitol News Illinois, Lee Enterprises Midwest and ProPublica into rampant abuses and cover-ups at Choate Mental Health and Developmental Center, a state-run institution in southern Illinois that houses people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and mental illnesses. The new law applies to employees at state-run institutions and at privately operated community agencies for people with developmental disabilities and mental illnesses that operate under the oversight of the Illinois Department of Human Services and its Office of the Inspector General.

The news organizations detailed how employees had lied to investigators, leaked sensitive investigative details, retaliated against people who reported abuse and sought to indoctrinate new workers into the cover-up culture. Employees who engaged in such actions made it difficult to pursue cases of patient abuse, yet they rarely faced serious consequences. IDHS Inspector General Peter Neumer suggested the change in law last year.

The new law allows the OIG to report workers who engage in such misconduct to Illinois' existing Health Care Worker Registry, which would bar them from working in any health care setting in the state.

The registry identifies any health care worker who has been barred from working with vulnerable populations in any long-term care setting, such as state-operated developmental centers or group homes. Under prior law, workers could be barred because they had been found to have

Penalties

from page 6

engaged in financial exploitation; neglect that is considered “egregious”; or physical or sexual abuse. The new law adds “material obstruction” of an investigation to the list of findings that can be reported to the registry, which is maintained by the Illinois Department of Public Health.

Pritzker signed the bill on the same day the IDHS inspector general released a 34-page report that recommended a “top to bottom analysis” of all processes related to the reporting of abuse and neglect at Choate “because at the present time there appear to be fundamental problems with all aspects of that system.”

The OIG report referenced the beating of a patient with a developmental disability by Choate staff in December 2014 that was covered by the news outlets. Four mental health technicians were charged with felonies in connection to the beating. Three of them pleaded guilty to failing to comply with abuse reporting laws for state employees, and one — Mark Allen, a mental health technician who had been originally charged with felony aggravated battery — pleaded guilty to felony obstruction of justice.

The report noted that at least eight people colluded to obstruct the state police and OIG investigation. Few staff members were forthcoming with details, even though they later told investigators it was the worst case of abuse they had ever seen.

“This was a textbook example of a code of silence, in which staff seek to protect each other from the consequences of their misconduct by remaining silent about what they witnessed or lying to protect their fellow employees,” the new OIG report stated. While Allen was ultimately reported to the registry after the inspector general found him responsible for the abuse, the other three were not. Even though they were criminally convicted of failing to report what they’d witnessed, and the inspector general found that they had engaged in the cover-up, prior law did not include obstruction as a reportable offense.

The new law is a “necessary reform that will provide additional protection for residents and hold accountable any bad actors who violate the trust of a resident or patient,” Alex Gough, a spokesperson for Pritzker, said in a statement.

“Governor Pritzker continues to take the longstanding problems at Choate very seriously, and he remains committed to providing a healthy, safe living environment for every single person residing in the state’s care.”

On Monday, Neumer said in a statement that he was pleased that the governor and legislators supported the measure, which passed both chambers unanimously, because it “serves as a strong deterrent to those who would engage in ‘code of silence’-type conduct, where employees lie or omit key facts to investigators in an effort to protect themselves and/or their fellow employees.”

“When employees fully and completely cooperate with OIG’s investigations, that also enhances OIG’s ability to fact-find, which serves as an additional deterrent to misconduct,” he said.

IDHS Secretary Grace Hou noted in a letter to Neumer, which was included in the inspector general’s report, that she also had backed the legislative change. That is one of several steps her department has taken to address conditions at Choate and in the agency’s 12 other developmental centers and psychiatric hospitals, the letter said.

In a statement, Marisa Kollias, a spokesperson for IDHS, said that a “system-wide transformation” of the agency’s facilities is already underway.

In March, Pritzker and Hou announced that more than 120 residents of Choate — about half of the facility’s population — would have to move out for their safety. The residents and their guardians were given up to three years to find an alternative placement, such as in a community group home or another state-run facility.

In addition to the relocation of some of Choate’s residents, the department has also hired a chief resident safety officer and is implementing other

safety enhancements.

Kollias noted that Hou asked the inspector general to conduct the review of Choate last September, the same month the news organizations published their first in a series of reports about Choate.

“IDHS leadership continues to be deeply concerned by the events investigated and reported on by the OIG,” Kollias said. “The report underscores the importance of actions that IDHS has taken since the beginning of the administration, including substantially expanding training, hiring new staff and installing security cameras.”

The inspector general has repeatedly called for the installation of security cameras at Choate and in other IDHS facilities, but the department had previously said that doing so was complicated by federal regulations. The department said late last week that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, which partially funds its institutional care, has provided new guidance that will allow for the installation of cameras in indoor, common area locations. The department, the statement said, “will be installing those expeditiously.”

New Law Limits Venue For Constitutional Lawsuits to Sangamon, Cook Counties

Pritzker signs bill backed by attorney general and passed with only Democratic support

By Peter Hancock Capitol News Illinois

People who file lawsuits in state courts challenging the constitutionality of a state law, administrative rule or executive order will now have to file those cases in either Sangamon or Cook counties.

Gov. JB Pritzker on Tuesday signed House Bill 3062, which applies only to cases brought against the state or any of its officers, employees or agents in which the plaintiff seeks to have a law, rule or action declared unconstitutional or they seek an injunction on the grounds of constitutionality. However, it also specifically exempts cases arising out of collective bargaining disputes.

It cleared the General Assembly with only Democratic support.

The bill came in response to a flurry of lawsuits filed in recent years in courthouses throughout the state challenging such things as Pritzker’s COVID-19 mitigation orders, a law that would end cash bail, and, most recently, the state’s ban on assault-style weapons and large-capacity magazines.

Senate President Don Harmon, D-Oak Park, who sponsored the bill in the Senate, said those cases typically end up being consolidated, and most of them eventually end up before the Illinois Supreme Court, which sits in Springfield and Chicago.

But he also accused plaintiffs’ attorneys in recent cases of selectively choosing where they file their cases in order to improve their chances of finding judges who may be more sympathetic to their cause, a practice Harmon described as “forum shopping.”

“And what we have seen recently is similar cases being filed in scores of counties, causing the attorney general to have to defend the same action in multiple counties with forum shopping,” he said during floor debate on the bill. “This is a simple effort to make sure that all important, critical constitutional questions end up in the right venue.”

But Senate Republican Leader John Curran, of Downers Grove, accused Democrats of engaging in their own brand of venue shopping

by restricting constitutional challenges to courts in Springfield and Chicago.

“Courts exist to serve the people, which is why they are located where people live,” he said in a statement after Pritzker announced the bill signing. “This legislation is clearly an attempt by the governor and the attorney general to send constitutional challenges to courts that they believe will be more favorable to the administration.”

Harmon argued that while Springfield is the state capital, Chicago is also a kind of second seat of state government.

“The statutes are actually replete with jurisdictional references to Cook and Sangamon as the two primary jurisdictions,” he said. “I think it’s the same reason that I have an office in Springfield and an office in Chicago; Leader Curran has an office in Springfield and an office in Chicago; the governor, the attorney general, all the constitutional officers have an office in Springfield and an office in Chicago. It is essentially an alternative place of government.”

Republicans, however, argued that it would inconvenience people who may be aggrieved by a state law or action but don’t live anywhere near Springfield or Chicago.

In the House, for example, state Rep. Patrick Windhorst, from the town of Metropolis on the banks of the Ohio River, noted that he lives closer to the state capital of Tennessee than he does to Springfield, and he is almost as close to Atlanta, Georgia, as he is to Chicago.

“So to say if this body passes an unconstitutional law, in order for me or another person in my community to contest that law, I’ve got to travel a great distance and bear that expense that comes with that, is not fair to the individuals in these communities,” he said during floor debate in the House.

The language of HB 3062 originated in the Senate and was inserted as a set of amendments into a House bill that originally dealt with landlord-tenant relations. It passed the Senate on May 19 by a vote of 37-16. The House concurred with the amendments 69-35.

Capitol News Illinois is a nonprofit, nonpartisan news service covering state government. It is distributed to hundreds of print and broadcast outlets statewide. It is funded primarily by the Illinois Press Foundation and the Robert R. McCormick Foundation, along with major contributions from the Illinois Broadcasters Foundation and Southern Illinois Editorial Association.

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