

Sample Ballot, page 6

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FREE

Daytripping **Macktown**

Charles Herbst

The interpretive center and other buildings at Macktown are open from 2 to 4 on the second Sunday of the month. At other times, a trip to see the site and the building exteriors still makes for a pleasant day trip.

Stephen Mack, Jr., widely regarded as the first permanent white settler in Winnebago County, was born in Vermont in 1798. He was sent to a school on the site of the present Dartmouth College. He left school and joined his Detroit-based father as a licensed fur trapper for the American Fur Company. His territory ran from the Four Lakes Region (now Madison) to Grand Detour.

At Grand Detour, Mack married, Hononegah, a Potawatomi. Stephen and Hononegah had 11 children, two of whom died in childbirth. Hononegah was well regarded for her kindness to those in need and her care for the sick. She was one of the first people in the region to successfully navigate between the White and Native American cultures.

Stephen Mack built the first bridge in Illinois across the Rock River, claimed 1000 acres of land along the river, and established a hamlet at the junction of the Rock and Pecatonica Rivers that he named Pecatonic. Mack offered the bridge to the State of Illinois, but they declined to accept it.

Mack was an entrepreneur and a land speculator. With the importance of river transport in the early 19th Century, this was a strategic site, also not far from the mouth of Racoon Creek and the Sugar River, which also facilitated fur trapping. In 1840, Mack built an impressive house for his family at Pecatonic. At that time, the US census showed the population of Pecatonic at 281 persons living in 50 households.

Stephen Mack was a progressive who cared about education as well as the role of women in society. Mack included Hononegah's name on the deed to his property, which was unheard of in those days. He built a shop next door that was used as a cabinet shop by Sylvester Stevens and had a second-story classroom. Mack wanted his children to be educated, as well as his wife. He paid the teacher's wages personally. He also offered 20 acres of land at Pecatonic to the Rockford Female Seminary, the institution that went on to become Rockford University. The school did not take him up on the offer.

A limestone building, Whitman's Trading Post, was built in 1846. The building served as the Whitmans home and a general store, including postal services. It is still standing, and the interior has been restored and furnished with period pieces.

Across the Rock River, the Talcotts founded Rockton, which has a long history as well. The Talcotts were friends of the Macks and initially stayed at the Macks' home when they came to the area. Rockton flourished be-



Hononegah's and Stephen Mack's house



Sylvester Steven's cabinet shop

continued on page 2

Mike Carlyle For County Board

Quidnunc



Russuan Oil?

Whose side are
we on?



Marilyn Blank, 90, Formerly of Harvard, Sept. 20
Terry Davidson, 50, Harvard, October 8
Daniel England, 64, Cherry Valley, October 9
Lucille Gieseke, 92, Belvidere, October 13
Donald Hopkins, 92, Caledonia, October 9
Roger Huber, 94, Belvidere, October 7
Phyllis Jacobs, 93, Harvard, October 7
Daniel Neubert, 74, Formerly of Belvidere, Oct. 7



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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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Macktown

from page 1

cause the Talcotts built a mill race that bypassed a bend in the river and provided power for the community.

Hononegah died in 1847 and Steven Mack passed in 1850, leaving their nine children as orphans. They were scattered in foster homes in Michigan and Wisconsin. Several descendants have returned and settled in the vicinity. The wooden bridge was swept away in a flood in 1851. After Mack died, the remaining settlers gradually left and moved across the river to Rockton. A major reason for the move was that Rockton had power from the mill race, which Pecatonic lacked.

Today, the Pecatonic settlement is known as Macktown. The site is owned by the Forest Preserve District of Winnebago County. The district acquired the site in 1927, and much of it became a golf course in the 1950s. The Macktown Living History Foundation has actively researched and curated the site.

Macktown is also an important archeological site. There is evidence of human habitation on the site dating back 13,000 years. The area was once covered by a sea, and many fossils have been unearthed.

Macktown Forest Preserve is located just west of the Village of Rockton on Illinois Route 75 at the junction of Wagon Wheel Road. This is the most scenic part of Winnebago County, and there are several other forest preserves in the area. None of the forest preserves charge an admission fee. Rockton has several inviting places to eat. Macktown is served by the Stateline Mass Transit District dial-a-ride service, which also connects to the Rockford Mass Transit District.

Websites: macktownlivinghistory.org and winnebagoforest.org.

Republican-Turned-Independent Collin Corbett Hopes to Give Voters an Alternative for Governor

He differs from his former party on support for service tax, critical of Trump

Ben Szalinski & Brenden Moore
Capitol News Illinois

Collin Corbett has spent enough time in politics to know he's a longshot to pull off a victory as an independent candidate for governor.

"I'm going to push as hard as I can before Nov. 3," Corbett said in an interview with Capitol News Illinois. "But I'm a political strategist. I can do math. I'm aware of how this will likely turn out at the end of this election."

But the former Republican strategist said it's more of a long game.

"I'm 40 years old. I got a long runway ahead, and there's a ton of people who've been coming up to me saying, 'I don't know if I can vote for you in this election, but I'm all in for your larger goal of building an independent majority,'" he said. "So Nov. 4, I'm in, let's go."

Corbett said his campaign is about proving there is an appetite for independent, centrist candidates in Illinois as voters weigh their options between staunch Democratic Gov. JB Pritzker and Trump-endorsed Republican Darren Bailey.

Corbett last worked for Republicans in the March primary season, including for Don Tracy, the party's former chair and current nominee for U.S. Senate. But he is taking a hiatus from advising campaigns to mount his own bid for governor.

Independent candidates face a greater challenge to make it onto the ballot and often get just a few percentage points of the vote. Corbett said 15% would be enough to make a point and position himself or another candidate to try again in 2030.

Though he's long been an insider in the nation's two-party system, he's now changing his tune.

"We've got to start changing things now because the path we're on — with these two parties that only seem to offer extremes, and they just want to snipe at each other and attack each other instead of actually getting things done — it's not working for me," Corbett said.

Independent traits

Corbett said he's skipped the presidential question on the ballot in the last three general elections and supported John Kasich and Nikki Haley in the 2016

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Corbett

from page 2

and 2024 primaries respectively — two Republicans who are more often identified as traditional members of the party, separate from Trump's wing.

Among Illinois political role models, Corbett views himself as a blending of late former Gov. Jim Edgar and former Sen. Mark Kirk, who were among the socially moderate, fiscally conservative Republicans who once dominated the state party.

"There are really good people on both sides," Corbett said. "It's just this tribalism where my side is good and your side is evil. That's the thing that's ruined our politics."

Corbett, an experienced pollster, said he believes the average Illinois voter is center-right on fiscal policy, but center-left on social issues, "which is exactly where I've always been."

He said he supports marriage equality, abortion rights and more gun control measures. Corbett said Democratic voters "could feel pretty comfortable with where I'm at" on all social issues.

He said he believes in a more conservative fiscal approach but differed from Republicans by supporting a tax on services.

He called the state's reliance on sales taxes — citing items such as diapers, formula and groceries — "regressive".

"If we can shift that to services, especially higher-end services, and get it out of the basics, you can not only raise more revenue for the state, which then can use it to lower property taxes, but you can also help those working families in Illinois who are struggling right now," he said.

Corbett, who has a two-year old son with another child on the way, praised Pritzker's focus on early childhood education.

But he said overall that this year's candidates have spent more time focusing on things happening outside Illinois.

"It seems like both of the major-party candidates are obsessed with Trump and with federal policies," Corbett said, adding he thinks Pritzker's constant fights with Trump are causing Illinois to lose federal funding.

Plans for office

Corbett contrasts his positions with those of Bailey, who has called for abolishing the Illinois Tollway, instituting a 1% property tax cap and using a DOGE-style method to root out wasteful spending in state government.

"I wish I had whatever magic beans Darren Bailey is growing on his farm, but unfortunately, I have to live in reality, and in reality, we've got to fund our roads, we've got to fund our schools, we've got to fund our police and fire," Corbett said.

Corbett also called for diversifying funding for road construction and said the motor fuel tax won't be sustainable as more electric vehicles join the roads. He said the state should levy a mileage-based tax instead.

On ethics reform, he said the legislative inspector general should be empowered to subpoena and to release its own reports. But more broadly, Corbett said there should be an independent ethics oversight commission that covers all state government, from state workers to elected officials.

*continued on page 4***OP-ED****The Administration Of the Law****Bob Evans Rockford University**

I hope that you are all doing well. Most observers seem to anticipate a "blue wave" of some magnitude. If that indeed occurs one wonders what we will be left with. To pervert an old phrase, it is difficult to imagine Trump "going quietly into that good night".

Critics question both laws that have been proposed and laws that have been adopted by the current administration. In addition to the nature of the laws themselves, however, we must scrutinize the details of the actual enforcement of the law. Laws that may or may not be objectionable in themselves can be applied or enforced in such a way as to be seriously troubling. This administration has done just that very thing. Two examples will suffice to make the point.

First is the riddling with bullets by ICE of the car of a fleeing immigrant scheduled for deportation. ICE agents shot and then arrested the wounded immigrant. During the shooting, the man's five year old son sat defenselessly in the back seat of the car.

When questioned about why it was necessary to fire at the car with the child in the car, an ICE spokesperson smiled confidently and dismissively offered a ready answer. He rebuked the questioner with the sarcastic rejoinder that the officers "did not know that the boy was in the back seat". The irony in the fact that the rejoinder was in fact an admission of culpability completely escaped the ICE official.

We do not raise here the question of identification procedures, pursuit procedures, or use of force procedures. We note only that the officers "did not know the boy was in the back seat". Surely that is noteworthy in itself.

The second law enforcement procedure that we will note involves Defense Secretary Hegseth proposing to televise the firing squad execution of Nidal Hasan, the former Army officer who shot and killed 13 soldiers, and wounded over 30 more at Fort Hood. He was wounded in the incident, and is now wheelchair bound. He has expressed clearly the desire to be a martyr for his cause.

Hegseth justified the broadcast in order to inform the public "that there's(sic) significant consequences for these

types of things". Really?

Who broadcasts executions? Iran does. Afghanistan does. The French Revolution did, in its own way. As one critic observed, wryly, Hegseth is actually threatening to air an old fashioned "snuff film". We could observe a man, albeit a villainous one, in a wheelchair get his head blown off. Broadcasting the event would also serve the martyr's cause.

We have examined only two examples, albeit egregious ones, of the administration of the law by the administration. We could cite in addition all the striking pardons that have been issued. We could cite as well the selective prosecutions of administration critics. But what is the point of all this?

The point is that there can be a disturbing and disruptive difference between the law itself and the actual administration of the law. To create or amend the law can be difficult and controversial. Surely the actual administration of the law faithfully and fairly ought to be at least somewhat simpler.

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Corbett

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One of the biggest issues in state government also hits close to home for the Palatine resident: incentivizing the Bears to build a stadium in Arlington Heights. Corbett got married at the former Arlington Park horse racing track and said he wants the land to be used for something that benefits the public and doesn't just become another complex of condos that already proliferate throughout northwest Cook County.

Corbett said if he was governor, he would commission a study to determine how the Arlington Heights site would compare to the Hammond site in terms of economic benefit. He said a study like that would be key to convincing skeptical Chicago lawmakers to get on board.

"That study's never been done because we don't have a governor who's actually leading on finding consensus on this issue," he said.

Inside the campaign

Corbett is running with Carolyn Schofield, a former Republican McHenry County Board member who is president of the county's mental health board and is also a member of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning. Until April this year, she was a legislative director for the Illinois Senate Republicans. Schofield also ran for lieutenant governor in 2022 alongside former Republican Sen. Paul Schimpf.

When Corbett filed to run in May, he said he expected strong support from donors and some noteworthy endorsements.

"You're going to start to see a lot of positive developments on our fundraising," he said then. "It's not going to be too long before we pass the Republican candidate on fundraising."

That hasn't happened.

He loaned his campaign \$500,000 and had more cash on hand than Bailey on July 1. But Bailey has spent more money and reports a steady stream of donors, indicating some level of grassroots support for his campaign.

Corbett has reported just four contributions over \$1,000 since July, while Pritzker has dumped more than \$90 million into his campaign. Corbett acknowledged that shortcoming and said he hears from many people who would support him, but not in this year's election. He said some donors also don't want to be the first to contribute and that's holding up others.

He also said he didn't intend to be the candidate.

"We went out actively recruiting somebody who could lead this independent movement in Illinois and we had really good people lined up who had way, way bigger names," Corbett said. "And unfortunately, for financial reasons and personal reasons, they couldn't do it towards the end."

His campaign's public presence has also been limited. Corbett said he's holding private meetings with voters and will hold town halls soon. But much of his public campaigning to this point has been limited to news releases and social media posts.

He said that's by design, as his campaign is "actively targeting" disaffected voters and people who are frustrated by politics.

While his campaign likely poses a greater threat to Bailey's than to Pritzker's, his opponents aren't acknowledging him. Corbett said that makes sense because any criticism would only raise his profile.

Asked last month at the State Fair if Corbett's campaign poses a threat, Bailey replied, "Who?"

Illinois Republican Party Chair Bob Grogan told reporters in August, "I think it's actually just a business model to prove that you know, 'Hey, you pay me enough money, I can get you on a ballot in the future,'"

Independent history

While independent candidates have found electoral viability in states like Maine and Nebraska, history is not on Corbett's side in Illinois. For one, the state's two established political parties have long wielded what's effectively a duopoly in the political arena.

This has its roots in the state's "We don't want nobody nobody sent" political culture in which party machines — Democratic in Cook County and Republican in much of downstate — dominated state and local government.

Vestiges remain, such as the state law that requires Democratic and Republican candidates for statewide office to collect only 5,000 signatures to obtain ballot access. Independents and third-party candidates, on the other hand, must obtain 25,000.

Third parties can become established political parties if their candidate wins at least 5% in the preceding election. In the past century, this has only happened twice.

It occurred first in 1986, when Democrat Adlai Stevenson III won 40% running on the Solidarity Party line—a move to avoid running on a ticket with Democratic lieutenant gubernatorial nominee Mark Fairchild—a follower of conspiracy theorist Lyndon LaRouche. Then, in 2006, when Green Party nominee Rich Whitney secured 10%. Neither candidate won, and the parties were unable to maintain their established status following the next election.

The last true independent on the ballot for governor was Scott Lee Cohen in 2010. He won 135,705 votes, about 3.64% of the statewide share, despite having withdrawn as the Democratic Party's lieutenant governor nominee earlier that year amid domestic violence allegations. In 2002 independent Marisellis Brown received 23,089 votes, or 0.65%. And in 1932; independent W.W. O'Brien got 1,182 votes, or 0.03%.

Despite this history, Corbett believes he has a lane that's reliant on convincing independents and moderates that an independent candidate is viable.

He said he expects his election night margins to "surprise people what kind of strength is out there for a centrist mainstream type of movement".

"I know on election night the number is going to be higher than frankly anybody expects it to be," Corbett said. "Does that mean it's going to be enough to win the race? We'll find out."

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Pritzker, Bailey Meet In Only Governor Debate of the Election

Federal issues key focus as candidates lob attacks

Ben Szalinski Capitol News Illinois

Democratic Gov. JB Pritzker and Republican Darren Bailey spent an hour talking over and accusing each other of stretching the truth in their only planned meeting of the campaign Tuesday night.

The WTTW forum was supposed to be a question-and-answer session, but Bailey quickly revealed his strategy to interrupt Pritzker on nearly every question, launching the event into a full-blown debate. The candidates were asked about their plans on a variety of policy issues and Pritzker often listed his previous accomplishments while Bailey used his time to slam Pritzker's leadership.

"I wish you'd stop interrupting," Pritzker said midway through the debate. "I do think people ought to hear what we have to say."

The pair met for two debates in 2022 ahead of Pritzker's 12-point victory. Four years later, many of the positions for the two candidates remained the same, and the relationship remained heated.

The candidates sparred on state spending, education funding, safety net hospitals, the SAFE-T Act, the Chicago Bears, Choate Mental Health and Developmental Center and more.

But much of the debate centered on the relationship between the federal government and the state. Bailey urged the audience to "fill up your glass of water or your iced tea or your lemonade" and "take a drink" every time the governor mentioned President Donald Trump. He reminded them to do so each time the governor invoked the president.

Bailey, who has spent the campaign trying to appeal to moderate voters in the Chicago area, tired of several federally focused questions.

"I think we're all ready for the tariffs to end. I think we're ready for the war in Iran to end," Bailey said when asked how he'd respond to Trump's tariffs. "But these questions, this sounds like this is a debate about the presidency of the United States with President Trump. That's something the president deals with. We need to be focused on what we can do here in Illinois."

Bailey, a farmer, also punted on a question about what he'd like to see in the next federal farm bill, saying "I'm not running for president like JB Pritzker is."

"I'm flattered that you think I could get elected president of the United States," Pritzker retorted at one point.

Instead, Bailey said Illinois lawmakers should lower the estate tax. When challenged by Pritzker to endorse the Family Farm Preservation Act that would cap that tax, Bailey said "I need to read it," pointing out that Democrats haven't passed it despite controlling all levers of state government.

Budget issues

The candidates spent considerable time
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Debate

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debating education funding. Pritzker listed Illinois' improvement in various rankings of test scores and public school funding. But he said more money is still needed, despite the fact Illinois has increased funding education funding by about \$3 billion in his tenure under the Evidence-Based Funding model.

"The very question from Jackson County schools suggests that we're not up to par like JB just said that we were," Bailey said in reference to a southern Illinois reporter's question. "The point's made clear: Evidence-Based Funding is not working because Evidence-Based Funding suggests that more money is the answer."

"More money is not always the problem," he said, instead suggesting the state should reduce unfunded mandates. He also pledged to replace the entire State Board of Education if he's elected.

Pritzker wouldn't commit to meeting Chicago Public Schools' demand more funding during this fall's veto session.

"We can't just magically come up with \$150 million when one school district or another asks for it," he said.

More broadly on the budget, Bailey has pledged to institute a DOGE-style (Department on Government Efficiency) review process if he's elected.

"At two in the morning, you're given this budget, 5,000 pages, and you're told to pass it," Bailey said. "Even the Democrats themselves don't know what's in there. It's time for a forensic audit."

Pritzker sidestepped a question about putting a millionaire's tax on the ballot and instead criticized Bailey for voting against the budget when he was in the legislature.

"If we continue to tax the rich, that's a socialist mentality and we can't afford to do that," Bailey said.

Public safety

The candidates also dove into public safety issues. Bailey said Pritzker's decision to significantly reduce available care at Choate Mental Health and Developmental Center in Anna will limit mental health services in southern Illinois and put pressure on law enforcement.

Pritzker defended the decision for the abuse-plagued facility.

"I said at the very beginning—that if we could not fix it because the personnel weren't fixing themselves, or being fired, or laid off, then we needed to close that facility," Pritzker said. "And I followed through on my promise."

The SAFE-T Act, the 2021 law that included the elimination of cash bail in Illinois, also got another vetting four years after it was a dominant issue in the governor's race.

Pritzker said he is "always open" to amending the law, which puts the onus on state's attorneys and judges to determine whether a defendant is jailed while awaiting trial. but the governor didn't elaborate when asked to assess how the law is working and instead brought up Bailey's support for lessening gun restrictions.

Bailey pointed to recent crimes in Chicago involving people on electronic monitoring. The law allows people on monitoring to have two free roaming periods each week, which Bailey said needs to change. Democratic Cook County State's Attorney Eileen O'Neill Burke has also called on lawmakers to amend electronic monitoring laws.

But Bailey also said the whole SAFE-T Act should be repealed, prompting Pritzker to retort that Bailey's solution was returning to a cash bail system "where the most violent criminals can buy their way out of jail."

Bailey also criticized Pritzker for having an Illinois State Police security detail.

Bears and other issues

There was only brief discussion about the Chicago Bears' stadium plans. Pritzker reiterated how the Bears are a private business and the state isn't in the business of subsidizing them, though it could fund related infrastructure projects.

"I'm just glad I'm not going to be known as the governor that lost the Bears," Bailey said when asked to explain his plan to facilitate their move to Arlington Heights. He accused Pritzker of delaying engagement with the team until Indiana stepped in with a massive subsidy package.

On housing, Bailey suggested Illinois needs to lower property taxes before he ripped Pritzker about the state's lackluster population growth.

On lowering utility prices, Pritzker repeated he will push lawmakers to pass the POWER Act in November — a bill many advocates believe will help reduce energy costs by requiring data centers to supply their own power.

Bailey criticized the state's two major climate and energy bills passed under Pritzker, which aim to take fossil fuels offline by 2045. Critics say that deadline

disincentivizes coal and gas plants from investing in the state, driving up prices and reducing available production.

"We're phasing out reliable energy far too soon," he said. "I have no problem with bringing on what we suppose is clean energy, but we all know the wind doesn't always blow, and the sun doesn't always shine."

Pritzker's latest energy plan has focused on battery storage as a means of increasing reliability.

On Medicaid funding and struggles many Illinois hospitals are facing because of federal funding cuts, Bailey suggested lawmakers "reprioritize spending" while Pritzker called for universal health care and faulted cuts at the federal level — prompting Bailey to call for a "drink."

Independent candidate Collin Corbett was not on the stage Tuesday night, garnering only a brief mention.

"The good news is there is an alternative to the two party circus you saw on display tonight," he said in a statement. "My running mate, Carolyn (Schofield), and I have developed common sense plans to get our state moving in the right direction. Send a message to the broken two party system by voting for a mainstream Independent for Governor."

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☐ Andrew S. Chesney	REPUBLICAN
REPRESENTATIVE	
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☐ Dave Vella	DEMOCRATIC
☐ Kathy Easton	REPUBLICAN
REPRESENTATIVE	
FOR REPRESENTATIVE IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY SIXTY-NINTH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT (Vote for one)	
☐ Peter Janko	DEMOCRATIC
☐ Joe C. Sosnowski	REPUBLICAN
FOR REPRESENTATIVE IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY EIGHTY-NINTH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT (Vote for one)	
No Candidate	DEMOCRATIC
☐ Tony M. McCombie	REPUBLICAN
FOR REPRESENTATIVE IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY NINETIETH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT (Vote for one)	
No Candidate	DEMOCRATIC
☐ John M. Cabello	REPUBLICAN
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FOR COUNTY CLERK AND RECORDER (Vote for one)	
No Candidate	DEMOCRATIC
☐ Amy E Ohlsen	REPUBLICAN
FOR COUNTY TREASURER (Vote for one)	
No Candidate	DEMOCRATIC
☐ Curtis P. Newport	REPUBLICAN
FOR COUNTY SHERIFF (Vote for one)	
No Candidate	DEMOCRATIC
☐ Scott Yunk	REPUBLICAN
EDUCATIONAL SERVICE REGION	
FOR REGIONAL SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (BOONE AND WINNEBAGO COUNTIES) (Vote for one)	
No Candidate	DEMOCRATIC
☐ Scott Bloomquist	REPUBLICAN
FOR REGIONAL SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (DeKALB COUNTY) (Vote for one)	
No Candidate	DEMOCRATIC
☐ Carmen R. Siragusa	REPUBLICAN
FOR REGIONAL SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (McHENRY COUNTY) (Vote for one)	
☐ Bridget Belcastro	DEMOCRATIC
☐ Diana Hartmann	REPUBLICAN
COUNTY BOARD	
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No Candidate	DEMOCRATIC
☐ Matt Ellingson	REPUBLICAN
☐ David R. Wiltse	REPUBLICAN

FOR MEMBERS OF THE COUNTY BOARD DISTRICT TWO (Vote for not more than two)	
No Candidate	DEMOCRATIC
☐ Paul T Zeien Jr	REPUBLICAN
☐ Jayden Lee Gallagly	REPUBLICAN
FOR MEMBERS OF THE COUNTY BOARD DISTRICT THREE (Vote for not more than two)	
☐ Mike Carlyle	DEMOCRATIC
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☐ Erin C. Hannigan	DEMOCRATIC
No Candidate	REPUBLICAN
JUDICIAL	
FOR JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT SEVENTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT SECOND SUBCIRCUIT (To fill the vacancy of the Hon. Eugene Doherty) (Vote for one)	
No Candidate	DEMOCRATIC
☐ Scott Robinson	REPUBLICAN
JUDICIAL RETENTION	
BALLOT FOR JUDICIAL CANDIDATES SEEKING RETENTION IN OFFICE <i>"Vote on the Proposition with respect to all or any of the Judges listed on this ballot. No Judge listed is running against any other Judge. The sole question is whether each Judge shall be retained in his or her present office."</i>	
CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE	
SHALL Lisa R. Fabiano be retained in office as JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT SEVENTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT?	
☐ Yes ☐ No	
SHALL Gwyn Gulley be retained in office as JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT SEVENTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT?	
☐ Yes ☐ No	
SHALL Ronald J. "Ron" White be retained in office as JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT SEVENTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT?	
☐ Yes ☐ No	
PROPOSITION	
BOONE COUNTY CAP AND LOWER PROPERTY TAX ADVISORY QUESTION	
Should the Illinois General Assembly pass legislation to cap and lower local property taxes and provide state funding to local governments that agree to reduce property tax levies?	
☐ Yes ☐ No	

BOONE COUNTY RESTORE LOCAL ZONING AUTHORITY ADVISORY QUESTION
Should Illinois law be amended to restore local zoning authority by allowing counties to regulate, approve, or deny commercial energy and industrial developments, including commercial solar energy facilities, battery energy storage facilities, and data centers, in order to protect agricultural land and local community interests?
☐ Yes ☐ No
BOONE COUNTY LIMIT ON SCHOOL ADMIN COSTS ADVISORY QUESTION
Should the Illinois General Assembly establish reasonable limits on the percentage of a public school district's operating budget that may be spent on central administration, with the goal of directing more funding to classrooms and reducing pressure on local property taxes?
☐ Yes ☐ No
BOONE COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT NO. 5 PROPOSITION TO DISSOLVE BOONE COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT NO. 5
Shall the Manchester Rural Fire Protection District Number Five, also known as Boone County Fire Protection District No. 5, dissolve and be consolidated into the North Boone Fire Protection District No. 3?
☐ Yes ☐ No



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Illinois Tax Revenue From Gambling Increased 19% Last Year

Sports betting, video gambling continue to drive increase

Maggie Dougherty *Capitol News Illinois*

Illinois bettors lost more money than ever last year, according to a new state report.

State coffers, meanwhile, went in the opposite direction, collecting a record \$2.7 billion in gambling-related revenue — a 19.2% increase from the previous year. It marks a 90% increase from fiscal year 2019, the final year before the state approved a massive gambling expansion aimed at raising revenue for the state's ongoing capital infrastructure plan.

A report released this month by the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability noted revenues are expected to grow further in the coming years, as several new permanent casinos open, new slot machines enter Chicago bars and restaurants, and sports wagering continues its rapid growth with new fantasy sports offerings.

For the second year in a row, video gambling machines surpassed the Illinois Lottery as the largest-grossing source of wagering revenue in the state. Those machines brought in more than \$1 billion in state and local tax revenues, while lottery revenues remained relatively flat at \$788 million.

Sports wagering remains the fastest-growing source of gambling revenue, with more than \$15 billion wagered in 2026 alone, generating \$593 million in state taxes.

Casino receipts grew 13% from the year prior, but COGFA warned that recent growth is largely due to new casinos opening rather than better performance among individual casinos. Since state lawmakers passed a massive gambling expansion in 2019, the number of casinos allowed to operate in Illinois has risen from 10 to 17.

Prior reporting by Capitol News Illinois and the Illinois Answers Project found that gamblers in Illinois lost nearly \$8 billion last year alone.

Adam Hoffer, director of excise tax policy at the Tax Foundation, a nonpartisan tax policy nonprofit, said gambling taxes like Illinois' can put the state's interests at odds with the interests of residents struggling with gambling addiction.

"This puts the state in a weird position, right?" Hoffer said. "They want to discourage activity on one hand, but it's their revenue source on the other hand."

The state last assessed problem gambling during the pandemic when sports gambling wasn't yet fully implemented. That report estimated 383,000 Illinois adults had a gambling problem, and another 761,000 were at risk of developing one, though some clinicians consider the estimates an undercount.

Problem gamblers have one of the highest rates of suicide; the assessment estimated one in 10 problem gamblers in Illinois had thought about or attempted to end their life that year. One in three

had done so in their lifetime, it found.

Parlaying losses

Sports gambling has become a billion-dollar industry in Illinois in the six years since it was legalized. Last year, bettors in the state placed more than 319 million sports wagers. Nearly 99% of those bets were made online.

Fueling that growth are parlay bets, which allow bettors to stack multiple outcomes — the Padres beat the Cubs, the Sox make it to the World Series and Tyson Bagent throws two touchdowns against the Packers — into a single bet.

If even one leg of the bet fails, the whole parlay fails. Because the odds get worse as more legs are added, the bets offer high payouts on relatively low wagers, making them particularly attractive.

"Especially if you're at a 16-leg parlay that you might be able to put in \$1 and it'll pay you \$100,000," recovering compulsive gambler Caleb Driker-Ohren said. "All it takes is one team to win a game. Like, how hard is that? Just get another team to win their game and then when it hits, too, it's a rush."

Parlay bets are so attractive, in fact, that bettors placed them almost 200 million times in the past fiscal year, accounting for three in every five bets placed.

And while parlay bets were responsible for almost a third of sports wagering payouts, parlay bettors also accrued the highest net losses at \$879 million; nearly 62% of all betting losses in the year came from parlays.

Gambling losses are disproportionately felt by compulsive gamblers, especially when it comes to sports betting. Though the breakdown in spending has not been studied in Illinois, a 2024 study in Connecticut found that nearly 71% of all legal gambling revenue in the state came from the less than 7% of residents identified as problem or at-risk gamblers.

Over half of sports bets, it found, were made by less than 2% of Connecticut residents identified as compulsive gamblers.

Despite bettors placing fewer bets this year than the year before, state tax revenues were still higher thanks in part to a new per-wager tax instituted for bets placed online.

Illinois' sports wagering revenue outpaces that of other states that have enacted similar legislation in recent years. Gamblers in Pennsylvania, which has a similar population size and opened sports betting two years before Illinois, saw losses of \$663 million in fiscal year 2026, trailing Illinois' \$1.4 billion.

Gas station casinos

When Illinois first allowed slot machines, or video gambling terminals, outside of casinos in 2012, insiders estimated they would plateau at around 20,000 machines.

But while casinos and other forms of gambling were limited amid the pandemic, video gambling terminals flourished. Illinois sets no limits on the number of establishments that can offer video gambling.

The state is now nearing 50,000 video gambling terminals, or "the equivalent of over 40 'full-size' Illinois casinos," according to the report.

Chicago's city council recently voted to lift its longtime ban on video gambling terminals. Since over a fifth of the state population resides in Chicago, the report predicts the city's legalization to have a "huge impact" on video gambling revenues.

Already, Illinoisans are losing triple the money they did a decade ago to these slot machines, which are considered one of the most addictive forms of gambling.

That's not just because there are more machines, the report shows; the net income per machine has increased from around \$117 per day in 2016 to over \$182 in 2026.

Illinoisans lost more than \$3.3 billion in total playing slots last fiscal year. For the second year in a row, state and local governments netted over \$1 billion in video gambling taxes.

Prediction markets

One somewhat unknown variable when it comes to sports betting revenue is the continued growth of unregulated prediction markets.

State lawmakers passed a law attempting to bring prediction markets like Polymarket and Kalshi under the regulatory umbrella of sports betting, though the move faced an expected legal challenge.

It would have created a fee structure that budget analysts predicted would have brought in \$5 million in state revenue. The law would also have subjected prediction markets to other sports betting regulations, like requiring customers to be 21 and older and disallowing bets on in-state college teams.

The Illinois Gaming Board sent cease and desist letters to 13 online operators, including Kalshi and Polymarket, seeking to bring them into compliance.

The companies, however, maintain that they are exchange markets regulated exclusively by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, and that Illinois' attempt to regulate them violates the Supremacy Clause of the U.S. Constitution.

Kalshi, its financial partner Coinbase and the CFTC sued the state in June to block the taxes from taking effect.

A federal judge ruled in their favor this week, issuing a preliminary injunction to protect the companies against Illinois' enforcement of its gambling regulations based on her finding that the markets should be federally regulated as financial swaps, not gambling.

"Many of the financial instruments at issue are likely swaps as defined by the Commodity Exchange Act — they just happen to be swaps that people find entertaining and fun," U.S. District Judge Martha Pacold wrote in her ruling.

She did not yet rule on whether Kalshi could be subject to the state's transaction fees, saying more argument was needed.

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