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State Revenue Projections Improve As Economic Uncertainty Grows

But legislature's revenue estimate remains below Pritzker's February proposal

By Ben Szalinski Capitol News Illinois

The General Assembly's independent forecasting commission has improved revenue projections for the upcoming fiscal year despite growing economic volatility.

That's good news for state lawmakers who are in the final weeks of crafting the fiscal year 2026 budget set to take effect July 1. But the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability's upward revision to its revenue forecast remains significantly more conservative than what Gov. JB Pritzker's office projected when he proposed a budget in February.

COGFA's latest update now projects \$54.5 billion in revenue in FY26 — \$266 million more than the commission's March projection, but still \$471 million below the governor's February projection for baseline revenues.

Pritzker has also proposed changes to raise an additional \$492 million in revenue in FY26, although that number is not factored into the baseline revenue comparison.

COGFA is also projecting state revenue will increase by \$317 million in the current fiscal year 2025 compared to its March projection. That means the state would finish the fiscal year at the end of June with \$53.9 billion of revenue — above the \$53.3 billion lawmakers budgeted for and \$31 million more than the governor's office's February forecast.

The projected revenue growth was driven by strong April income tax receipts. April revenue was up \$593 million compared to April 2024 and was driven by 20% growth in income tax receipts, thanks to higher capital gains and interest earnings last year. Corporate income taxes also grew by 6.6% for the month, even though the revenue source remains down 8.2% for the fiscal year.

But there are warning signs in several areas, according to COGFA. The commission lowered expectations for federal receipts for FY25 by 8.5% and 6.3% in FY26 because the state has been using a fund outside the typical General Revenue Fund for Medicaid-related expenses. That means reimbursements from the federal government to the state are not reflected in the state's General Revenue Fund total.

The commission also warned that the federal government could, at any time, decrease financial aid to states, creating more uncertainty.

"Those capital gains revenue increases are not sustainable so as we look at fiscal year 26, we should not expect that as we go into fiscal year 27, I think it's going to be an even worse look," COGFA Co-Chair Rep. C.D. Davidsmeyer, R-Murrayville, said at a news conference last

Continued on page 4



CTA TRAIN: A Chicago Transit Authority Red Line train heads south from the Addison station on Chicago's north side. (Capitol News Illinois photo by Andrew Adams)

With 1 Month Left in Session, Lawmakers Near Deal on Public Transit Reform

But hurdles remain as tensions rise between lawmakers and some regional transit officials

By Andrew Adams & Ben Szalinski
Capitol News Illinois

Lawmakers apparently are close to a deal to resolve one of Springfield's most hotly contested issues this session: transit reform.

Public transit agencies in Chicagoland — a region with roughly two-thirds of Illinois' population — face a collective \$770 million budget gap in the upcoming fiscal year. Heads of the agencies have turned to the state to fill that gap, but lawmakers have consistently said that reform of the agencies' government and better oversight are required before addressing funding.

If lawmakers don't reach a deal to reform the northeastern Illinois transit system and introduce new funding before their May 31 adjournment, transit officials say it will result in significant cuts, which would result in a "nightmare scenario," according to Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) spokesperson Tina Fassett Smith.

Sen. Don DeWitte, R-St. Charles, told reporters this week that lawmakers in the Senate "are very close to agreed language on governance," meaning a deal is close.

DeWitte, a longtime former mayor of suburban St. Charles and ranking Republican on the Senate's Transportation committee, said the deal would leave in place the three "service boards" that operate transit in Chicago and the suburbs: the Chicago

Continued on page 4

On May Day, Thousands March for Immigrant, Labor, Women and LGBTQ+ Rights

Rally in Chicago draws 175 organizations and protesters from across Illinois

By Sonya Dymova
Medill Illinois News Bureau

Michelle Nolasco, a 20-year-old DePaul University student from Orland Park, Illinois, held a sign that read: "I was supposed to be at school ... Instead, I am here, fighting for mi familia y mi gente," meaning "my family and my people."

"I feel like being in class is not as important as being here," Nolasco, a child of undocumented immigrants from Mexico, said Thursday. She was among thousands who gathered in Union Park to mark May Day with speeches and signs before marching through downtown to Grant Park later in the afternoon, where speakers — including Mayor Brandon Johnson — addressed the rally.

May Day — also known as International Workers' Day — is a global holiday commemorating the labor rights movement, in which Chicago played a pivotal role.

Across the nation and the world, hundreds of thousands demonstrated Thursday to champion workers' rights as well as to denounce the Trump administration's widespread crackdowns on immigration, its economic policies and disruptive global tariffs.

Immigration has become a major focus of May Day rallies in the U.S. since 2006, when roughly

Continued on page 6

Former Governor George Ryan Dead at 91; Remembered For Corruption Conviction, Halting Death Penalty

Ryan imprisoned for bribery scheme while serving as Secretary of State

By Hannah Meisel Capitol News Illinois

Former Illinois Gov. George Ryan died Friday morning at 91, more than two decades after leaving office for the last time and 12 years after his release from federal prison.

He died just one day after being put into hospice care in his native Kankakee.

Ryan, a Republican, served one term as governor from 1999 to 2003, and spent the last decade or so of his life speaking about and ultimately writing a book on his 2000 decision to put a moratorium on Illinois' death penalty and then commuting the sentences of 167 death row inmates in the state's prison system to life sentences.

"I can't really believe that there's ever gonna be a system devised where an innocent person couldn't be executed," Ryan told Capitol News

Illinois in a 2020 interview. "You gotta have a perfect law if you're gonna have ... death as a penalty. So I just figured the best way to do it was to do away with that opportunity."

But Ryan's time as governor — and his entire 35-year career in politics — was ultimately overshadowed by his time as secretary of state in the 1990s. During his two terms leading that office, Ryan oversaw a license-for-bribes scheme that led to the deaths of six children in a fiery vehicle explosion and 79 federal indictments, including his own.

Before that, Ryan served as lieutenant governor alongside Gov. Jim Thompson, whose law firm would later represent Ryan pro bono in his corruption case. He also spent two years as Illinois House speaker, capping a decade in the General Assembly.

A pharmacist by trade, Ryan began his political career in the late 1960s on the Kankakee County Board.

License-for-bribes conviction

The former governor spent nearly six years in prison and on home confinement after his 2006 conviction on corruption charges stemming from an investigation into a freak accident on a Milwaukee expressway in 1994.

The Willis family, who'd been driving from Chicago to a vacation in Wisconsin, were engulfed in flames when their minivan exploded after a taillight fell off a semitrailer truck and punctured the van's fuel tank. The explosion killed the six Willis children, while the Rev. Duane Willis and his wife Janet were badly burned.

An investigation into the crash revealed that other motorists had tried to warn the semi driver about the dangling vehicle part, but he didn't understand English, even though federal law requires truck drivers be proficient in English to get a commercial license.

After Wisconsin authorities passed along the information to the Secretary of State's office, an internal investigation found the truck driver may have paid a bribe to get his license. But Ryan squashed the probe and fired the investigators.

The feds, however, picked up the investigation while Ryan was running for governor, finding a systematic operation in which bribes paid for commercial driver's licenses were funneled into Ryan's campaign fund.

Even as secretary of state employees were being indicted in what came to be known as Operation Safe Roads, Ryan claimed to know nothing about the scheme and was elected governor over Democratic then-U.S. Rep. Glenn Poshard in 1998.

But as the investigation reached a fever pitch and the cloud of suspicion over Ryan grew, he chose to not run for a second term as governor in 2002. That paved the way for Democrat Rod Blagojevich's victory over Republican Jim Ryan, who suffered from sharing a surname and party with the then-governor.

Ryan was indicted in 2004, convicted in 2006 after a lengthy trial and went to prison in 2007 following a monthslong appeals process, making him the third Illinois governor to serve time. Several years later, Blagojevich would follow.

Death penalty moratorium

Since his 2013 release from prison and subsequent stint on home confinement, Ryan dedicated the last years of his life returning to a subject he'd become passionate about as governor: the death penalty.

Ryan parlayed his speaking engagements into a book, co-authored with a former Chicago Tribune reporter and published in 2020. The book, titled

"Until I Could Be Sure: How I Stopped the Death Penalty in Illinois," detailed the former governor's debates and deliberations leading up to his decision to put a moratorium on the state's death penalty in January 2000.

Just before leaving office three years later, Ryan commuted the death sentences of 167 Illinois prisoners, which garnered international attention.

Ryan's ascent to the governor's office coincided with emerging DNA evidence technology and a wave of exonerations across the country, including in Illinois. The state would later become known as an outlier for false confessions and exonerations. But at the time, Ryan's stance was controversial in a tough-on-crime era of politics.

In his 2020 interview with CNI, Ryan said the majority of his staff tried to dissuade him from making moves on the death penalty, which wouldn't be officially abolished in Illinois until 2011.

But Ryan said the uncertainty of decisions made under the death penalty system bothered him, especially in the wake of the exoneration of death row inmate Anthony Porter in February 1999, when Ryan was a month into his term as governor. Porter was freed after journalism students at Northwestern University uncovered evidence of his innocence.

"The whole system was just prone with error," Ryan said. "It's just — you got error in every corner."

Former Illinois House GOP Leader Jim Durkin, who in 2023 stepped down from the post Ryan held decades before, told CNI he'd gotten to know the former governor better in his later years through Ryan's son Homer.

Durkin said when he'd meet up with the Ryans in Kankakee while campaigning for fellow House Republicans, their lunches would often be punctuated by locals who'd wanted to say, "'Hello, governor' — not 'Hello, George' ... They loved him."

"He made a mistake and he did his time," Durkin said. "And he didn't express or show any bitterness toward anyone involved in his case. Just wanted to get on with his life. That shows a strong man who takes responsibility."


Illinois Senate Minority Leader John Curran, R-Downers Grove, echoed Durkin's accolades that Ryan was a "master of bridging the gap" both between Republicans and Democrats and between organized labor and management.

"He was a bold leader who wasn't afraid to reach across the aisle and bring people together for the greater good," Curran said. "His investments in infrastructure, technology, and education to help create a brighter future for Illinois will long be remembered."

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- Gerald Armbruster, 89, Belvidere, April 29
- Edward Dovey, 63, Poplar Grove, May 3
- Eugene "Gene" Herzing, 86, Belvidere, April 26
- Janice Knutson, 83, Belvidere, April 25
- Jeanne Mocadlo, 78, Belvidere, May 1
- Helen Oakes, 74, Belvidere, May 4
- Nicholas Panosian, 40, Harvard, April 23
- Kim Tansor, 63, Belvidere, May 2
- Andrew Werhane, 42, Poplar Grove, April 26
- Ronald Werner, 83, Poplar Grove, March 10



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OP-ED

Trump's Policy Implications

The economist Milton Friedman once observed, "We call a tariff a protective measure. It does protect. It protects consumers very well against one thing. It protects consumers against low prices."

Hard times, in the guise of tariffs, are coming. The economic blows will fall hardest on those who can afford them the least. Middle and working class folks spend most of their income on essentials. After paying for food, housing, energy, clothing, and health care, little "discretionary income" is left over. Now those essentials-many of them imported-will take an even bigger bite. Several estimates have put the increased cost of living for a family at several thousand dollars. Where will our fellow citizens find the money? Let us examine more fully these proposed policies.

First, why do this? Trump promises to "repatriate" manufacturing jobs, bringing them back "onshore" to avoid his tariffs. He claims that he can recreate a manufacturing, industrial economy. But how many years, yes years, will it take to construct all these new factories? Further, we must remember that many of the goods, while assembled here, are in fact assembled from imported parts. These parts, and thus the goods they complete, will now cost more. This "percentage of the final cost that consists of imported parts" statistic is especially high in the auto industry. Finally, the countries that import our exports will almost certainly retaliate with their own tariffs, thus pinching our exports. Can we really be sanguine about the possibility that this multi factored adjustment process will generate favorable results?

But there is more for us to consider. Many of our trading partners have also been reliable security partners. They have cooperated fully by following our lead in constructing over the last 80 years what scholars label the "rules based international order". Together we have signed treaties, formed international organizations, generated alliances, and established international trade relations that have literally knitted nations together into a fabric of order and prosperity. Increasingly, free markets have been relied upon to generate and maintain this order. If we abrogate economic agreements with our partners now will they trust our security and cultural commitments in the future? Remember Trump's harsh denunciations of our NATO partners. Remember Vance's speech excoriating our allies at the Munich Security Conference. Trump has trumpeted "America First"; what is heard, ominously, is "America Alone". There is an additional question, a troubling one, that we must ask about these tariffs. It is the question that Americans always ask of public policy. Is it Constitutional? Alas, the answer would appear to be no. The President claimed that the authority to impose these tariffs was granted by the International Emergency Economic Powers Act of 1977. That law does indeed grant the President the authority to respond to certain emergencies without waiting for Congressional authorization. But three features of these tariffs just might transcend the law's provisions. First, do we really currently face a genuine emergency? Are we really beset by a threat that is both so dire and so imminent that we cannot wait for the regular process of legislation? Second, the law authorizes a Presidential response to a focused threat posed by a single or a few malefactors. These tariffs will

be virtually universal, falling even on a Pacific island inhabited primarily by sea lions. The third problem with the tariffs compared to the law arises from the magnitude of the tariffs. The law envisions modest tariffs, while some of these "on again, off again" proposals will exceed 100%. The tariffs and the law are simply at odds with each other. This is a fatal flaw for a law in our Constitutional system.

To recount the problems adduced against these tariffs is to construct quite an indictment. The international and Constitutional problems will likely take a considerable amount of time to have their ultimate effect. The domestic economic problems, however, are likely to have an effect that is both immediate and dire. It is a perilous path the President has chosen. The immediate threat is the simultaneous curse of unemployment and high inflation. That nightmare is called "stagflation". You can look it up. But sit down first.

Bob Evans
Rockford University

Say 'No' to MAiD In Illinois

Dear Illinoisans, the End of Life Options for Terminally Ill Patients Act – a law proposed via Senate Bill 9 and House Bill 1328 – would have dangerous repercussions. It would destroy lives, reframe whether we should dissuade people suffering from suicidal thoughts from seeking so-called "aid in dying," and endanger already vulnerable lives such as those with mental illness and the disabled.

These pieces of legislation, trying to be pushed through the state House and Senate, would establish a law allowing terminally ill patients to seek medical aid in dying (aka MAiD). MAiD has already been legalized elsewhere. It is morally problematic for several reasons. It involves the deliberate destruction of human life, something that all the Abrahamic religions view as unethical since adherents think there is something divine about human dignity. While often described as the "compassionate choice" or a way of "living life to the fullest," MAiD – which opponents refer to as assisted suicide – doesn't involve compassion (literally "suffering with" the patient). It instead cuts life short, depriving the person of accepting whatever life offers next.

Opponents of these medical procedures are not the only ones labeling them "assisted suicide." A 2022 article from the Oxford academic journal British Medical Bulletin uses the phrase "assisted suicide" interchangeably with less demoralizing equivalents like "assisted dying." The same article says that lethal drugs taken orally, which are popular in certain states and Canada, display inconsistent side effects, including burning, vomiting, and re-

gaining consciousness after ingestion. In Oregon, as many as 14.8% of patients who wanted to end their lives via MAiD suffered unexpected complications from taking these drugs. Palliative care, by contrast, significantly diminishes pain near the end of life. In a recent article from The Guardian, palliative care physician Dr. Johan Randén said that patients who previously asked about assisted suicide, when given loving care and support, "let go of that thought."

MAiD can severely impact vulnerable lives whose will to live has deteriorated. While MAiD proponents always speak of "guardrails," extant MAiD programs prove increasingly lenient when accepting applicants. The most recent tragedy to make headlines occurred in Ontario, Canada. Last October, The Conversation reported how Ontario's "facilitated suicide" didn't eliminate only those with terminal illnesses but also those "suffering due to poverty, loneliness and other marginalization." The fact that those who suffered from mental illness or struggled to pay their bills were simply done away with is devastating. Instead of offering people a way to end their lives, we should dissuade individuals from suicide and give them hope.

Ethicists like Dr. Matthew Eppinette say "all national disability rights organizations with a position on assisted suicide legislation oppose it."

Illinois native Matt Creen was diagnosed with ALS 12 years ago and has lived more than twice as long as doctors suspected. Though quadriplegic, Creen loves life. "My life has as much value as any other life," he says. Creen believes legalizing MAiD pressures the terminally ill and the disabled to end their lives instead of accepting care from others. He wonders how much funding will go toward the search for an ALS cure if society's answer to such an illness is assisted suicide.

Society should not do away with its citizens. A good society looks for cures for sickness and social ills alike. Please contact your local legislator and ask them to vote "No" on Senate Bill 9 and House Bill 1328.

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Budget

from page 1

week.

COGFA Revenue Manager Eric Noggle wrote broader economic uncertainty necessitates a “more cautious approach” projecting next year’s revenue numbers.

“The unknown implications of tariffs create many questions related to the duration of the tariffs, their impact on prices, and if these changes could lead to a recession,” Noggle wrote. “These complicating factors and their potential impact on tax revenues make the revenue estimate for FY 2026 very challenging.”

Recent national economic reports have indicated the U.S. added more jobs than expected in April, but the nation’s gross domestic product declined by 0.3% in the first quarter of 2025, marking the first quarter of economic regression since 2022. Personal consumption grew by 1.8%, showing consumers overall aren’t yet cutting back, but it was the slowest growth since spring 2022.

“It’s very concerning because Illinois tends to lag the nation in economic growth and economic stability,” Davidsmeyer said.

The decline in GDP was driven by an increase in imports, COGFA Chief Economist Ben Varner wrote, because businesses are likely “front-loading” foreign purchases before tariffs imposed by the Trump administration kick in and make overseas goods more expensive. Imports are subtracted from domestic growth to calculate GDP.

National projections are also blaring more warnings. Wells Fargo modeling projects stagflation from tariffs and an increase in inflation will cause an economic downturn, while Goldman Sachs’ early April projection pegs the likelihood of a recession at 45%.

“The U.S. economy has entered a precarious phase, with early signs of contraction and rising inflation signaling the potential onset of stagflation,” Varner wrote. “While domestic demand and business investment remain relatively strong, they are being overshadowed by external shocks — particularly the surge in imports ahead of tariff implementation. The policy-driven volatility is already weighing on forecasts and investor confidence.”

The governor’s proposed \$55.2 billion FY26 budget is based on a December S&P Global forecast that projected stable economic growth and considered some of Trump’s proposed economic policies, including tariffs and tax cut extensions, Pritzker budget office director Alexis Sturm said told a legislative committee in February.

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Transportation

from page 1

Transit Authority, Metra commuter rail service and Pace Suburban Bus. The agreement, according to DeWitte, would provide new oversight powers to a “newly empowered” RTA, the agency that currently handles some financial oversight for the region’s transit agencies.

DeWitte was on the 16-member board of directors for the RTA for five years before joining the Illinois Senate.

Several proposals for reform have been pitched in recent months, with the plan outlined by DeWitte

being similar to what he called the “labor bill” — a plan initially put forward by a coalition of organized labor groups and unions.

But the brief description has superficial similarities to a plan proposed by RTA chairman and former Republican state senator Kirk Dillard. That plan also would empower the RTA

A more aggressive reform plan, which would have dissolved the three service boards and consolidated them into one agency, was proposed by transit activists and environmentalists. That consolidation plan was formalized into bills presented by Chicago Democrats Sen. Ram Villivalam and Rep. Eva-Dina Delgado.

While DeWitte is familiar with the negotiations, others involved differ on how close lawmakers are to a deal.

Villivalam, who chairs the Senate Transportation Committee, said he and his colleagues are “continuing discussions” about the bill.

“As we head into the remaining weeks of our spring legislative session, I look forward to working toward a solution that provides safe, reliable, accessible, and integrated public transit to the northeastern Illinois region,” Villivalam said in a statement.

The House of Representatives might bring other hurdles to a transit reform deal as lawmakers barrel toward their expected adjournment.

Rep. Marty Moylan, D-Des Plaines, who chairs a House committee that would likely hear a transit reform bill, has said repeatedly that no bill will be called in his committee that doesn’t meet his standards, including addressing concerns about safety on trains and buses.

But he echoed DeWitte’s read on the situation that a proposal similar to organized labor’s pitch will win out.

“That seems to be the consensus of the General Assembly: Leave the boards in, have them do some reforms, and let’s move forward,” Moylan told Capitol News Illinois. “We’re making progress with some of the transit agencies. The RTA still doesn’t get it, but they will by the end.”

‘Irresponsible’ PR campaign

The RTA, to raise awareness and potentially influence negotiations in Springfield, launched the “Save Transit Now” ad campaign earlier this month. That campaign features television and radio ads in English and Spanish as well as ads on billboards, digital signs, newspapers and social media.

The campaign encourages RTA riders to write emails to their lawmakers with the subject line “Save Transit Now: Support \$1.5 billion and an empowered RTA” and a prewritten message.

This frustrated several lawmakers involved in transit negotiations.

“To cry broke with one hand and drop three-quarters of a million dollars on a PR campaign with the other is wrong, and frankly, it’s irresponsible,” Rep. Kam Buckner, D-Chicago, wrote in the Chicago Tribune on Tuesday.

Buckner chairs the informal “working group” responsible for negotiating transit issues in the House.

Moylan, meanwhile, said the agency was “wasting all kinds of money” on the campaign, which isn’t going to make the General Assembly change its policies.

“It’s not how it works,” Moylan said. “It may have worked years ago, but not now.”

Fassett Smith, the director of communications at the RTA, said the \$750,000 price tag was an upper estimate of the cost and said it is the agencies’ “obligation” to make sure transit riders were aware of the RTA’s dire financial straits.

Another potential wrinkle as lawmakers wrap up negotiations comes from Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson, who is in Springfield this week to meet

with lawmakers about the city’s legislative priorities. Among them: transit funding.

“The city of Chicago deserves its fair share, and we’re going to continue to advocate for that, as I’ve already done,” Johnson said at a Tuesday news conference.

Johnson has a strained relationship with lawmakers in Springfield after several perceived missteps since he took office, including dragging his feet in funding migrant aid last year, arriving late in legislative sessions to discuss budget matters, and publicly clashing with Gov. JB Pritzker and other lawmakers over hemp regulation earlier this year.

Johnson has repeatedly in recent months pointed out that Chicagoans make up the majority of ridership among the three transit agencies that make up the RTA. When asked Tuesday whether that means Chicagoans should also be funding a majority of public transportation in the region, Johnson didn’t rule it out.

“That’s a conclusion that one could draw,” Johnson said.

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**Mother’s Day
Became Holiday in 1914***This Year’s Holiday is Sunday, May 11*

By Tom Emery

Mothers everywhere will rejoice. So will the greeting-card companies, flower shops, and telephone providers.

Though celebrated in pockets in previous eras, Mother’s Day has been an official holiday for over 110 years. On May 9, 1914, President Woodrow Wilson signed a proclamation designating the second Sunday in May as a day to honor the nation’s mothers.

“The signing was not that important to Wilson in a political sense. But it would not have taken much persuasion for Wilson to sign it,” said Andrew Phillips, curator of the Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library in Stanton, Va. “Strong women were greatly influential in his life, including his mother, his first wife, and his three daughters.” Ellen Wilson, the President’s first wife, died three months after the proclamation.

The concept for Mother’s Day was nothing new. Local celebrations were common in America, though nothing was accepted nationally. Some attribute the idea to Julia Ward Howe, composer of the “Battle Hymn of the Republic,” who first organized a “mother’s day for peace” on June 2, 1872.

Many also cite Anna Jarvis, a Grafton, W. Va. housewife who began the push for the holiday to honor her own mother, who died in 1905. As early as 1868, the elder Jarvis established a local committee for a “Mother’s Friendship Day” to heal wounds in families broken by the Civil War. Prior to that, she had also organized “Mother’s Day Work Clubs” to ease the suffering of ill and wounded Civil War troops.

In 1908, Jarvis organized official commemorations in Grafton as well as Philadelphia. In 1910, West Virginia declared Mother’s Day an official holiday.

Jarvis, though, clearly had a flair for self-promotion. In 1912, she trademarked the phrases “Mother’s Day” and “second Sunday in May”

Continued on Page 5

Mother's Day

from page 4

and created an international association for the holiday.

Though Jarvis claimed much of the credit herself, the establishment of Mother's Day was also promoted within the women's suffrage movement. "The suffragettes were among the first to call for the holiday," remarked Phillips. "Of course, the Mother's Day of what everyone envisioned then is much different than what it became."

Eventually, forty-six states celebrated the holiday in some form. In 1913, Congress passed a resolution for the observance of Mother's Day by government officials. The following year, the legislature approved a joint resolution calling for the official designation of the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day.

Wilson signed the proclamation on May 9, only one day ahead of the second Sunday of the calendar. As a result, there was not a lot of fanfare in the holiday's first year.

"But it caught on fast," said Phillips. "Hallmark began producing greeting cards by the early 1920s, and soon the holiday was moving closer to what we know today."

Jarvis, though, watched the popularity with disdain. Angered that Mother's Day had become commercialized, she spent her efforts and inheritance to fight for its removal. She found the greeting card craze particularly distasteful, believing cards were "a poor excuse for the letter you are too lazy to write."

In one instance, Jarvis reportedly filed a lawsuit to block a Mother's Day festival and was arrested for disturbing the peace at a sale of carnations for war mothers in 1925. She died penniless in 1948.

Ironically, Anna Jarvis never had children, unlike millions of American women before and since. According to 2010 Census figures, the United States had 85.4 million mothers, and some 81 percent of American women became mothers by age 40 to 44.



State Rep. Lisa Hernandez embraces U.S. Rep. Robin Kelly in 2022 after unseating her as Democratic Party of Illinois chair. (Capitol News Illinois photo by Jerry Nowicki)

U.S. Rep. Robin Kelly Joins Democratic Primary to Fill Durbin's Senate Seat

Former state party chair once again challenging a Pritzker-backed candidate

By Ben Szalinski Capitol News Illinois

U.S. Rep. Robin Kelly is the second Democrat to step into the 2026 primary race to succeed U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin.

Kelly, a resident of south suburban Matteson, has represented Illinois' 2nd Congressional District since 2013 and recently served a short stint as chair of the Democratic Party of Illinois.

"This moment requires proven leaders who have the experience to take on the toughest battles," Kelly said in a statement. "I've never backed down – not from gun lobbyists, not from MAGA extremists, and certainly not from a fight for what's right."

Kelly won a crowded 16-person primary in a 2013 special election to fill the congressional seat vacated by former U.S. Rep. Jesse Jackson, who resigned while under investigation for misuse of campaign funds and eventually went to prison. Kelly received more than half the primary vote before easily winning the special election.

Kelly currently represents one of Illinois' most geographically diverse congressional districts. The 2nd District stretches from the South Side of Chicago more than 100 miles south to Danville.

Kelly also served two terms in the Illinois House and unsuccessfully ran for state treasurer in 2010.

As a member of Congress, Kelly has focused much of her time on health care and gun violence issues. In a video launching her campaign, Kelly reflected on the time she refused to stand for a moment of silence in the U.S. House following a mass shooting.

"And the next time, someone else sat down with me," Kelly said. "And then another, until a moment of silence felt more like an echo of inaction."

Kelly joins Lt. Gov. Juliana Stratton in the race. Stratton has already received endorsements

from Gov. JB Pritzker and U.S. Sen. Tammy Duckworth.

Her entrance into the race also sets up another battle with Pritzker.

With Durbin's support, Kelly was elected chair of the state Democratic Party in 2021 to replace Mike Madigan after the long-time party head bowed out of politics amid a then-ongoing federal investigation. Kelly beat Chicago Ald. Michelle Harris for the party leadership job, but her success was short-lived.

Read more: Democratic Party chair bows out in re-election bid, paving way for state Rep. Lisa Hernandez

Kelly ended her bid for reelection as party chair in 2022 after it became clear she would not have enough support to beat State Rep. Lisa Hernandez, D-Cicero, for party leadership. Pritzker supported Hernandez while Kelly continued to have Durbin's support.

In the 2026 primary, however, Durbin told reporters last month he likely won't endorse any candidate for his Senate seat in the primary. Durbin announced last month he will retire when his term ends in 2027 following 44 years in Congress.

Read more: 'I've done this my way': Durbin reflects on decision to retire

Kelly enters the primary with \$2 million in her campaign account, according to federal election records.

"You could say I've been an underdog my whole life," Kelly said in the video.

Democratic U.S. Reps. Lauren Underwood and Raja Krishnamoorthi are still contemplating entering the race for Senate, but Illinois Treasurer Mike Frerichs announced Monday he will not join the fray.

State Sen. Robert Peters, D-Chicago, posted on social media Tuesday he is considering next steps in his career and possibly running for Kelly's congressional seat in 2026.

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

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LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 17TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS
PROBATE DIVISION
IN RE THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF Renato Garza Jr ,
Deceased **NO: CASE 2025PR11**
CLAIM NOTICE

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

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

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

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

DATED: 03/26/2025 ENA O. GARZA, ADMINISTRATOR
CHRISTIAN SOLARES #6325075
Attorney for Estate
4855 E State St Ste 24
Rockford, IL 61108
815/312-1703
Published in The Boone County Journal 4-24, May 1, 8, 2025

state of Illinois in the circuit court of the 17th judicial circuit
county of BOONE probate division

In the Matter of the Estate of Kenneth B. Klug Decedent.
Case No. 2025-PR-23
CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given of the death of KENNETH B. KLUG, of Belvidere, Illinois. Letters of Office were issued on April 28, 2025, to LISA WEAVER, 496 Edinburgh Lane, West Dundee, Illinois 60118 as Executor.

Claims against the estate may be filed on or before November 1, 2025, that date being at least six (6) months from the date of first publication, or within three (3) months from the date of mailing or delivery of Notice to Creditors, if mailing or delivery is required by Section 18-3 of the Illinois Probate Act, 1975, as amended, whichever date is later. Any claim not filed by the requisite date stated above shall be barred.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court at the Boone County Courthouse, Probate Division, 601 N. Main Street, Belvidere, IL 61008, or with the estate legal representative, or both.

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

/s/ Lisa Weaver
LISA WEAVER, Executor for the Estate of KENNETH B. KLUG,
Deceased
PREPARED BY:
HINSHAW & CULBERTSON LLP
Marcia L. Mueller, ARDC #3122098
100 Park Avenue
Rockford, Illinois 61101
815-490-4919
mmueller@hinshawlaw.com
Attorneys for Estate
Published in The Boone County Journal May 1, 8, 15, 2025

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

In the Parental Responsibilities of A.F.A.P.:
Paola Pinzon Rangel, Petitioner
Case No. 2024FA92
,and
Campo Daniel Alfonso Rueda, Respondent.

NOTICE BY PUBLICATION
NOTICE IS GIVEN TO YOU CAMPO DANIEL ALFONSO RUEDA, and to all others whom it may concern that on December 30, 2025, a Petition for Allocation of Parental Responsibilities was filed in this court and that in the courtroom of the Honorable Judge Balogh in the Boone County Courthouse at 601 N. Main St., Belvidere, IL 61008, on June 11, 2025 at 10:15 A.M. or as soon thereafter as this may case may be heard, an adjudicatory hearing will be held upon the petition to have a guardian of the minor appointed.

UNLESS YOU file your answer or otherwise file your appearance in this case in the Office of the Circuit Clerk of this Court in the Boone County Courthouse, Belvidere, Illinois on or before May 30, 2025 an order or decree of default may be taken against you for the relief asked in the Petition.

Clerk of the Circuit Court
Prepared by: Omar Salguero
ARDC No. 6311354
Law Offices of Omar Salguero
7210 E. State St., Suite 206
Rockford, IL 61108
P: (815) 446-0770
Published in The Boone County Journal May 1, 8, 15, 2025

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that a Tentative Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for the operating purposes of Boone County Fire Protection District No. 2 in the County of Boone, State of Illinois, for the fiscal year beginning May 1, 2025 and ending April 30, 2026 will be on file and available for public viewing during business hours (8:00 AM – 5 PM) at the station at 1777 Henry Luckow Lane, Belvidere, IL.

Notice is further hereby given that a public hearing on said Budget and Appropriation Ordinance will be held at 6:00 p.m. Monday June 2nd, 2025 at Boone County Fire Protection District at 1777 Henry Luckow Lane, Belvidere, IL. and that final hearing and action will be taken at that time.

Dated this 25th day of April, 2025
Mark Huntington, Treasurer
Published in the Boone County Journal May 1, May 8, May 15 of 2025

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

In the Parental Responsibilities of A.F.A.P.:
Ingrid Alfonso Pinzon, Petitioner
Case No. 2024FA91

and
Joany Alexis Leon Leal, Respondent.
NOTICE BY PUBLICATION

NOTICE IS GIVEN TO YOU JOANY ALEXIS LEON LEAL, and to all others whom it may concern that on December 30, 2025, a Petition for Allocation of Parental Responsibilities was filed in this court and that in the courtroom of the Honorable Judge Balogh in the Boone County Courthouse at 601 N. Main St., Belvidere, IL 61008, on June 11, 2025 at 10:15 A.M. or as soon thereafter as this may case may be heard, an adjudicatory hearing will be held upon the petition to have a guardian of the minor appointed.

UNLESS YOU file your answer or otherwise file your appearance in this case in the Office of the Circuit Clerk of this Court in the Boone County Courthouse, Belvidere, Illinois on or before May 30, 2025 an order or decree of default may be taken against you for the relief asked in the Petition.

Clerk of the Circuit Court
Prepared by: Omar Salguero
ARDC No. 6311354
Law Offices of Omar Salguero
7210 E. State St., Suite 206
Rockford, IL 61108
P: (815) 446-0770
Published in The Boone County Journal May 1, 8, 15, 2025

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

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF LYLE J. SHERMAN,
Deceased **PROBATE No. 2025-PR-21**

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION – WILLS AND CLAIMS

Notice is given to creditors of the death of LYLE J. SHERMAN. Letters of office were issued on April 25, 2025, to Ed Zenk, 8304 Shore Drive, Machesney Park, Illinois 61115, Independent Administrator, who is the legal representative of the estate. The attorney for the estate is Attorney RUSSELL J. LUCHTENBURG, 130 South State Street, #303, Belvidere, Illinois 61008.

Claims against the estate may be filed on or before November 14, 2025, that date being at least six (6) months from the date of first publication, or within three (3) months from the date of mailing or delivery of Notice to creditors, if mailing or delivery is required by Section 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 Boone County Circuit Clerk-Probate Division, at the Boone County Courthouse, 601 North Main Street, Belvidere, IL 61008, or with the legal representative and to his attorney within ten days after it has been filed.

Attorney Russell J. Luchtenburg
130 South State Street, #303
Belvidere, Illinois 61008
815/547-5588
Published in the Boone County Journal 5/01, 5/08, 05/15/2025

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 17TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
BOONE COUNTY, BELVIDERE, ILLINOIS
DEUTSCHE BANK NATIONAL TRUST COMPANY, AS TRUSTEE
FOR AMERICAN HOME MORTGAGE ASSETS TRUST 2006-6,
MORTGAGE-BACKED PASS-THROUGH CERTIFICATES
SERIES 2006-6 PLAINTIFF,
-vs **NO. 25 FC 7**
Unknown Heirs and/or Legatees of Tammy J. Wilkinson a/k/a Tammy Webb, Deceased; Walden Webb; Ireland Webb; Timothy A. Miller, as Special Representative of Tammy J. Wilkinson a/k/a Tammy Webb, Deceased; Unknown Owners And Non-Record Claimants
DEFENDANTS

PUBLICATION NOTICE
The requisite affidavit for publication having been filed, notice is hereby given you Unknown Heirs and/or Legatees of Tammy J. Wilkinson a/k/a Tammy Webb, Deceased; Unknown Owners and Non-Record Claimants.

Defendants in the above entitled suit, that the said suit has been commenced in the Circuit Court of Boone County, by the said Plaintiff against you and other defendants, praying for the foreclosure of a certain Mortgage conveying the premises described as follows, to wit:

PART OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION NINETEEN (19), TOWNSHIP FORTY-FIVE (45) NORTH, RANGE FOUR (4) EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN; BEGINNING AT AN IRON STAKE IN THE SOUTH LINE OF RAY STREET, EXTENDED, 66 FEET EAST FROM THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF BLOCK 2 OF RAY'S ADDITION TO POPLAR GROVE, AS THE SAME IS PLATTED AND RECORDED IN THE RECORDER'S OFFICE IN BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS, THENCE EAST ALONG SAID STREET LINE, 66 FEET TO AN IRON STAKE; THENCE SOUTH AND PARALLEL WITH THE EAST LINE OF SAID BLOCK 132 FEET TO AN IRON STAKE; THENCE WEST, PARALLEL WITH SOUTH LINE OF RAY STREET, 66 FEET TO AN IRON STAKE; THENCE NORTH 132 FEET TO THE PLACE OF BEGINNING. SITUATED IN BOONE COUNTY, STATE OF ILLINOIS.

Commonly known as 117 Ray Street, Poplar Grove, IL 61065
Permanent Index No.: 04-19-102-008
and which said Mortgage was made by Tammy J. Wilkinson, single woman Mortgagors, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for HLB Mortgage as Mortgagee, and recorded in the office of the Recorder of Deeds of Boone County, Illinois,
Document No. 2006R10475.

And for other relief; that summons was duly issued out of the said Court against you as provided by law, and that the suit is now pending.

Now therefore, unless you, the said above named defendants, e-file your answer to the Complaint in the said suit or otherwise make your appearance therein, on or before the 30th day after the first publication of this notice which is JUNE 9, 2025. Default may be entered against you at any time after that day and a judgment entered in accordance with the prayer of said Complaint.

E-filing is now mandatory for documents in civil cases with limited exemptions. To efile, you must first create an account with an e-filing service provider. Visit

<https://efile.illinoiscourts.gov/service-providers.htm> to learn more and to select a service provider. If you need additional help or have trouble e-filing, visit <http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/FAQ/gethelp.asp>.

Clerk
LOGS Legal Group LLP
Attorney for Plaintiff
2801 Lakeside Drive, Suite 207
Bannockburn, IL 60015
(847) 291-1717
ILNOTICES@logs.com

THIS IS AN ATTEMPT TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT IF YOUR PERSONAL LIABILITY FOR THIS DEBT HAS BEEN EXTINGUISHED BY A DISCHARGE IN BANKRUPTCY OR BY AN ORDER GRANTING IN REM RELIEF FROM STAY, THIS NOTICE IS PROVIDED SOLELY TO FORECLOSE THE MORTGAGE REMAINING ON YOUR PROPERTY AND IS NOT AN ATTEMPT TO COLLECT THE DISCHARGED PERSONAL OBLIGATION.

6088-953309
Published in The Boone County Journal May 8, 15, 22, 2025

ASSUMED NAMES

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

No. 4232 - The undersigned person(s) do hereby certify that a RETAIL business is or is to be conducted or transacted under the name of TOO HAT TO HANDLE that its location is or will be 13553 HARVES WYAY 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: 815-621-4146

COURTNEY CHESTER 13553 HARVEST WAY
POPLAR GROVE, ILLINOIS 61065
I, Julie A. Bliss, County Clerk And Recorder of Boone County, in the State aforesaid, do the hereby certify that the within is a true and correct copy of an Assumed Name Certificate on file in my office. Dated: May 7, 2025
Julie A Bliss, County Clerk and Recorder
Published in Boone County Journal 5/8, 5/15, 5/22 - P

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

No. DBA4231 - The undersigned person(s) do hereby certify that a CRAFT AND COTTAGE BAKERY business is or is to be conducted or transacted under the name of LATINO + CRAFTS that its location is or will be 615 SOUTHTOWNE DR 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 as below Phone Number: 847-505-3355
JULIE TU LATINO 615 SOUTHTOWNE DR.
BELVIDERE, ILLINOIS 61008

I, Julie A. Bliss, County Clerk And Recorder of Boone County, in the State aforesaid, do the hereby certify that the within is a true and correct copy of an Assumed Name Certificate on file in my office. Dated: May 5, 2025
Julie A. Bliss,
County Clerk and Recorder
Published in Boone County Journal 05/08,15,22 - P

May Day *from page 1*

one million people — nearly half a million in Chicago alone — marched as part of a nationwide movement against tough, proposed, federal anti-immigration reforms. The legislation, called the Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act, would have criminalized living in the U.S. without legal permission, making it a felony.

Nearly 20 years after those first rallies, the crowd in Chicago erupted Thursday into chants of “No hate, no fear, immigrants are welcome here!” Some said the struggle was all too familiar.

“I was one of the main conveners of the 2006 mega march on March 10 and then on May 1 of 2006, and having to fight against it all over again is obviously a deja vu,” said Omar Lopez, 80, a member of the Central Committee of the Consejo de Resistencia en Defensa del Inmigrante, the body that made the initial call for people to take to the streets.

Since President Donald Trump was sworn into office in January, his administration has launched immigration raids across the country, urged others to self-deport, canceled foreign students’ visas, and even deported legal residents without due process. “We will close the border. We will stop the invasion of illegals into our country,” Trump said during his campaign.

From April 21-26, federal and local authorities arrested 1,120 Floridians in an effort dubbed “Operation Tidal Wave,” according to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Earlier that month, the administration sent over 200 migrants to a notorious maximum-security prison in El Salvador in a wave of arbitrary arrests and deportations that 20 United Nations human rights experts deemed “contrary to international law.”

“This is a life-and-death question for the labor movement and for the whole working class, not just for those that are immigrants: It has to do with the unity of the working class and our ability to fight for our own interests,” said David Rosenfeld, a Chicago-based railroad worker who is a member of the Socialist Workers Party and the SMART Transportation Division. “That’s why I’m particularly proud of my union, the SMART Transportation union, which has been standing up for our member, Kilmar Abrego García.”

García, a first-year apprentice with the union with no criminal convictions who was living in Maryland, was wrongfully deported to his native El Salvador — despite a 2019 court order

May Day

from page 1

shielding him from being sent there due to the risk of persecution by local gangs that had terrorized his family. The Trump administration called the deportation “an administrative error” but contended García was a member of the MS-13 gang, an allegation a federal judge questioned and the man’s wife and lawyer denied. Officials later added domestic abuse to the list of allegations, actions his wife acknowledged but explained, adding that “Kilmar is a loving partner and father.”

A federal judge, an appeals court and the Supreme Court have all ordered the government to facilitate García’s return to the country, but the administration has argued in court that it had no means of doing so

Although immigration became a focus of the event, it was not the only one.

“We have groups that have other grievances against what’s coming out of Washington, and they’re also using this as a vehicle to express their grievances,” Lopez said. “Now, we see a broader coalition than we did in 2006.”

Some organizations were planning to organize their own May Day events but decided to follow the lead of the Central Committee.

“We were going to put on a May Day march that was specifically geared towards women and fem-identifying workers,” said Jill Manrique, an executive director at Chicago Jobs With Justice.

Morelos, a co-founder of Casa Aguascalientes Chicago, a non-profit working to empower the Hispanic community. “But other organizations are having buses coming from other places, like the North Side and the West Side of Chicago.”

The diversity of the organizations, locations and people represented in the rally was reflected in the thousands of handmade signs, which addressed a variety of issues, ranging from LGBTQ+ and reproductive rights to the rights of health care and education workers, as well as U.S. foreign policy toward Israel and Russia.

“The basic message is that we are resisting, we are defending every community and every sector of society,” said Jorge Mujica, another member of the Central Committee of the Consejo de Resistencia en Defensa del Inmigrante. “This is not only about immigrant workers, this is about students, this is about colleges and universities, this is about the health care system. It’s about everything that is under attack by the Washington administration.”

Faith Humphrey Hill, a Chicago-based fiber artist, said she struggled with choosing only one issue to focus on when weaving her sign.

250501 Hill SD.jpg

“I almost knitted a really long tapestry, like a long scarf that just drags on forever, because I don’t know how to sum up everything that upsets me,” she said. “Women’s rights is obviously close to home, but I also have a trans child, and

Plan To Overhaul Higher Education Funding Meets U of I Opposition

Bills would prioritize neediest schools for new funding

By Peter Hancock Capitol News Illinois

A plan to overhaul the way Illinois funds public universities is running into stiff opposition from the state’s largest higher education institution, the University of Illinois System.

The plan, which has been in development for the last four years, calls for adding roughly \$1.7 billion in new university funding over the next 10-15 years, but distributing that under a formula that would give priority to schools that are currently the least adequately funded.

Senate Majority Leader Kimberly Lightford, D-Westchester, the lead sponsor of Senate Bill 13, said it is designed to bring equity and stability to the state’s higher education system.

“This bill does not just aim to increase funding,” she told a Senate committee Wednesday. “It tells us for the first time in our state’s history what students and universities need to succeed and how to adequately fund universities over time to actually meet that need. It defines what universities require to educate, support and graduate students successfully, and then it directs resources to do just that.”

But Nick Jones, executive vice president and vice president of academic affairs for the U of I System, said the proposed formula would be detrimental to the state’s flagship university and that it needs considerably more work before it can be ready for legislative approval.

“The University of Illinois system is absolutely dedicated to expanding equitable access, enhancing student success and promoting statewide economic growth,” he told the committee. “The proposed legislation penalizes institutions that provide the most support for underrepresented and rural students while failing to ensure long-term access.”

History of underfunding

The proposal is a product of a commission that lawmakers established in 2021 — the Illinois Commission on Equitable Public Education Funding. The commission grew out of the Legislative Black Caucus’ efforts that year to enact sweeping social and racial justice reforms in the wake of unrest that followed the killing of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police the previous summer.

“Every university participated in the commission, and the work of the commission acknowledged that Illinois has never had a systemic approach to university funding, nor one that is rooted in student or institutional need,” Lightford said. “Instead, it has been a largely political process.”

Robin Steans, executive director of the advocacy group Advance Illinois, which took part in the commission, said Illinois went through a decadeslong period of steadily cutting its support for higher education, resulting in a system she said is so underfunded it can no longer be sustained.

As recently as 2000, she said, state funding for universities covered about 75% of their overall costs. Today, she said, state funding covers only about 35%, far below the national average of 60%.

“And the only place to go to make that up is tuition,” she said. “And so the lower we go, the more we’re pushing those costs to students,



Thousands rallied and marched in Chicago as part of the May Day observance for immigrant and labor rights, women and LGBTQ+ people, and against racism on May 1, 2025. (Medill Illinois News Bureau photo by Sonya Dymova)

“But when we found out that this was happening, we joined up—we didn’t want to split solidarity.”

According to Lopez, this year’s coalition included 175 organizations—from unions to faith-based groups—from across Illinois, including DuPage and McHenry counties and cities like Elgin, Rockford and Aurora. Unlike the recent “Hands Off!” campaign that spanned more than 30 cities throughout the state, the May Day rallies were held only in Chicago and Evanston. Still, many from outside the city joined the Union Park event.

One protester who would give only his first name for fear of retribution, Ashton — a young trans man from Ottawa, Illinois — drove a couple of hours to the event.

“It’s absolutely insane that we need to do this,” he said. “I keep seeing people saying, you know, if a child needs to be an activist, we’ve already failed them, and this is absolutely freaking true.”

Some organizations arranged transportation to bring people from outside the city.

“The eight buses that our organization is bringing are coming mainly from the Southwest suburbs like Bolingbrook, Plainfield, Romeoville, Joliet, Naperville and Lockport,” said Margarita

so his (Trump’s) attack on trans people really upsets me.

“My kid exists,” she added. “He’s trying to erase them, but no, they’re a human, and they exist.”

Sonya Dymova is an undergraduate student in journalism with Northwestern University’s Medill School of Journalism, Media, Integrated Marketing Communications, and a fellow in its Medill Illinois News Bureau working in partnership with Capitol News Illinois.

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

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Education

from page 7

pricing them out and driving them out.”

Proposed new formula

The proposed formula would operate much like the Evidence-Based Funding formula, or EBF, that lawmakers adopted in 2017 for K-12 education.

It would start with determining an “adequacy target” for each school to reflect how much they need to meet their educational missions. That would include such things as the cost of instruction and student services, operation and maintenance of physical facilities, and costs associated with meeting the school’s research and public service missions.

Like the EBF formula, that calculation also would take into account the unique attributes of each school’s student body and the higher costs associated with educating certain demographic groups, referred to in the bill as “underrepresented students.”

The formula then measures each school’s “resource profile” – the money it has available from sources such as state aid, tuition and fees, to cover the costs included in its adequacy target.

Those two calculations are used to determine each school’s “adequacy percentage,” which reflects the degree to which a school is underfunded, and its “adequacy gap,” the dollar figure reflecting the difference between its adequacy target and available resources.

According to preliminary calculations made public Wednesday, Western Illinois University in Macomb would rank as the most underfunded public university in Illinois on a percentage basis, with current resources meeting only 45.7% of its adequacy target. But because WIU is relatively small, its total “adequacy gap” would be just \$104.3 million, ranking seventh among individual campuses.

In terms of total dollars, the University of Illinois Chicago would have the largest adequacy gap of any campus, at nearly \$475.5 million.

Meanwhile, the state’s flagship university, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, would rank as the best-funded university in the state, at 88.6% of adequacy. But because of its size – with total enrollment in the fall 2024 semester of more than 56,000 – its total adequacy gap would rank fifth among all campuses, at \$137.4 million.

U of I opposition

“Although we support several of the key aspirational goals of the bill, we do not agree with the methodology proposed to achieve those goals,” Jones, of the U of I System, told the committee. “Nor do we agree that this will provide what the University of Illinois needs to succeed.”

Jones noted the U of I System as a whole – including the Urbana-Champaign, Chicago and Springfield campuses – enroll more than half of all public university students in Illinois, including 45% of all those who qualify for Pell grants, the federal need-based financial aid program for higher education. And yet, under the proposed

formula, he said the U of I System would receive only 28% of any new funding provided in the first year of the program.

In addition, he said the proposal also includes a formula for allocating any potential funding cuts that could happen in future years, one that would protect schools that are least adequately funded while requiring those closest to their adequacy target to bear the brunt of the cuts. Under that formula, the U of I System would absorb 74% of any future funding cuts.

“The University of Illinois system would support adopting a tiered, mission-aligned approach that better recognizes the distinct missions of the universities and equitably funds institutions based on their specific needs and contributions to student success and the state’s economic priorities,” Jones said. “This approach would ensure that funding supports student outcomes holds institutions accountable for results and drives true equitable distribution of the state’s investment in higher education.”

The Senate committee took no action on the bill Wednesday. An identical bill, House Bill 1581, is pending in the House. It is sponsored by Rep. Carol Ammons, D-Urbana, and is cosponsored by House Speaker Emanuel “Chris” Welch, D-Hillside, and Rep. Katie Stuart, D-Edwardsville, who chairs the House higher education budget committee.

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

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