



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Michael T. Carrigan, President
Tim Drea, Secretary-Treasurer

Published for Labor Activists

June 1, 2007

**Call The Illinois AFL-CIO at (217) 544-4014 For More Information
On These and Other Legislative Issues Important To Working People**

OVERTIME

Failing to reach an agreed budget by the May 31st, the General Assembly will be going into overtime session. During overtime, legislation that has an effective date prior to December 31, 2007 will need a 3/5's supermajority vote in each chamber to pass. To pass a State budget in the House, votes will be needed from Republican Leader Tom Cross who has advocated a "no growth" state budget. In the Senate, President Jones will need to convince 36 members of his caucus to pass a budget.

Although a State budget will be more difficult to pass, the Illinois AFL-CIO is committed to ensuring that State Government is fully funded and a long awaited Capital budget is part of the final budget package. Speaker Madigan has scheduled the House to be in session on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays through the month of June.

HB 1542 - Mandatory Collective Bargaining

Sponsors: Rep. Dugan (D - Kankakee)/
Sen. Halvorson (D - Chicago Heights)
SUPPORT

Makes collective bargaining mandatory with respect to the removal or discharge of an officer or member of a fire or police department unless the parties mutually agree otherwise.

Passed the Senate 39-12-3. Passed both chambers. Awaits Governor's Signature.

HB 1855 - Drug Testing

Sponsors: Rep. Winters (R - Rockford)/
Sen. Dillard (R - Westmont)
SUPPORT

As amended by the Illinois AFL-CIO. Mandates drug testing for employees on public works projects not covered by a collective bargaining agreement with drug testing policies.

Passed the Senate 58-0. On order of concurrence in the House.

SB 678 - Cable Competition

Sponsors: Bond (D-Grayslake)/
Brosnahan (D-Evergreen Park)
SUPPORT

Allows for TV Cable competition among various companies. AT&T, a union-based company, is expected to enter into the television cable market. AT&T's entry will create, thousands of construction jobs and at least 2,600 permanent union jobs.

Passed the House 113-0-2. On the order of concurrence in the Senate

SB 1249 - Fringe Benefits

Sponsors: Sen. Sullivan (D - Rushville)/
Rep. Flider (D - Decatur)
SUPPORT

Allows union members and Department of Transportation employees working temporarily at the Illinois State Fair to retain and earn credits for their health and welfare benefits.

Passed the House 116-0. Passed both chambers. Awaits Governor's Signature.

SB 1529 - Prevailing Wage

Sponsors: Sen. Forby (D - Benton)/
Rep. Gordon (D - Coal City)
SUPPORT

Guarantees prevailing wage for haulers of aggregate materials to and from the construction site (was only for delivery). The legislation will also consolidate the hearing process for the Department of Labor to determine the prevailing wage for a job classification.

Passed the House Labor Committee 13-7. Second Reading.

SB 1544 - Closing Corporate Tax Loopholes

Sponsors: Senator Hendon (D-Chicago) /
Majority Leader Currie (D-Chicago)
SUPPORT

Each year since the 1980's Illinois workers have been shouldering a larger and larger percentage of the tax burden for State services. SB 1544 closes eight loopholes in tax law that allowed corporations to short change Illinois working families.

Passed the House 63-53. Passed the Senate 32-26.

Public Employee Pensions

The Illinois AFL-CIO, the CFL and other public union leaders joined forces with Amalgamated Transit Union Locals 308 and 241 to stop the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) from creating a defined contribution pension plan or a two tier pension plan for CTA workers. The unions met Senators and members of the Illinois House to explain that ATU members are better served by negotiating pension reforms in the collective bargaining process. The ATU and the CTA may now enter into meaningful collective bargaining talks pension and health care benefits.

Rate Freeze

After passing the House earlier this year, the Senate Executive Committee sent a three-year utility rate freeze to the full Senate this week. The legislation covers customers of Commonwealth Edison and Ameren Illinois. If approved by the Senate and signed by the Governor electric rates will return to 2006 levels and will be frozen for at least three years. The legislation also provides refunds to customers who have been paying the higher utility rates in 2007.

Gaming

An expansion of riverboat gambling passed the Senate late last night with just 30 votes. The legislation will create a land-based casino in Chicago and three riverboats in the suburbs (South Suburbs, Lake County and the O'Hare area). In addition the legislation will provide subsidies for horse racing tracks, internet betting between boats and bookie-style betting over the telephone. UNITE-HERE and the Illinois AFL-CIO was successful in inserting requirements into the bill mandating the Gaming Board to examine wages and benefits paid to workers before awarding a license to conduct gambling.