

ICCTA ACTION ALERT

March 9, 2004

The Illinois General Assembly has adjourned to begin a two-week recess. Lawmakers are scheduled to return to Springfield on Tuesday, March 23, one week after the March 16 consolidated primary election. To date, a record 10,645 bills have been filed since the beginning of the session in January 2003. Few of these bills will advance to passage stage, and many bills have already stalled in what is predicted to be comparably abbreviated session.

State budget issues for Fiscal Year 2005 continue to dominate the legislative agenda. The Governor's recent budget proposal calls for funding reductions in many state agencies and higher education. Under the Governor's budget plan, state funding support for community colleges is reduced by 3.3% below FY 2004, which is also about 15% below the high-water mark of FY 2002. If the Governor's recommended budget is approved, community college funding from state sources will be very near the FY 1998 funding levels. Gov. Blagojevich's recommended budget for capital construction is scheduled to be announced in mid-April.

Several bills of interest to community colleges have been introduced. Most of these bills have not advanced and are not expected to continue through the process.

BILLS THAT HAVE ADVANCED

Senate Bill 3107 **Faculty Diversification (del Valle)**

ICCTA Position: **SUPPORT**

Status: **3rd reading in Senate**

Amends the Illinois Consortium for Educational Opportunity Act. Changes the short title to the Diversifying Faculty in Illinois Program Act. Makes changes concerning the definition of "institution of higher education," the Program Board, assistance to graduates, subcommittees, reporting, grants, and other matters.

House Bill 4224 **Property Tax Caps / Employment Cost Index (Eddy)**

ICCTA Position: **SUPPORT**

Status: **2nd reading in House**

Amends the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law in the Property Tax Code. Provides that "extension limitation" means (a) the lesser of 5% or the percentage increase in the Employment Cost Index (now, Consumer Price Index) during the 12-month calendar year preceding the levy year or (b) the rate increase approved by the voters. Defines "Employment Cost Index" as the Employment Cost Index for total compensation for civilian and state and local government workers published by the United States Department of Labor. Effective immediately.

HB 4247 **Open Meetings Act – Inspection of Verbatim Records (Black)**

ICCTA Position: **MONITOR**

Status: **2nd reading in House**

Amends the Open Meetings Act. Prohibits the inspection of the verbatim record of a closed meeting, including for discovery purposes, in a judicial proceeding other than in a judicial proceeding to determine whether the Act has been violated. Requires (now, permits) a court's examination of verbatim records in a civil proceeding to be conducted in camera. Requires that the initial examination in a criminal proceeding must be in camera, but other examinations need not be in camera. Removes the authority of an administrative hearing officer to redact information that may qualify under the attorney-client privilege.

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HB 4841 ICCB Faculty Member (Hannig)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Status: 2nd reading in House

Amends the Public Community College Act. Beginning July 1, 2005, requires one of the members appointed by the Governor to be a faculty member at an Illinois public community college. The bill has been amended to also add a community college trustee to the board.

BILLS THAT HAVE NOT ADVANCED

HB 3940 / SB 2580 Surplus State Property (Slone / Shadid)

ICCTA Position: OPPOSE

Status: Tabled by sponsor Rep. Slone

Amends the State Property Control Act. Redefines the term "responsible officer" to exclude college presidents. Requires that unused State property leased by the Illinois Department of Central Management Services may not be leased at less than 60% of the fair market rental value rate unless specified conditions are met. Provides procedures for determining the fair market rental value. Provides that the director of CMS may lease property for nominal consideration only under certain circumstances. Makes a first violation a Class B misdemeanor. Makes a second or subsequent violation a Class A misdemeanor.

HB 4141 Student Voter Registration (Chapa-LaVia)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Status: Held in committee

Creates the College Student Voter Registration Act. Beginning July 1, 2006, requires public universities, colleges, and community colleges in Illinois to (i) provide voter registration to students as part of the school registration process, (ii) specifically ask eligible students if they wish to register to vote, and (iii) request appointment of a sufficient number of deputy voter registrars.

HB 4692 East St. Louis Community College District (Younge)

ICCTA Position: OPPOSE

Status: Held in committee

Amends the Public Community College Act to require the Illinois Community College Board to establish a new community college district to be comprised of the territory of the former Metropolitan Community College District No. 541 and to be known as Gateway Community College. Provides that the Board may not abolish, restrict, or take over the operation of Gateway Community College without first notifying the General Assembly and receiving permission from the General Assembly for the action.

HB 4877 / SB 2157 SURS Sick Leave Credit (McCarthy / Haine)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Status: Held in committee

This ICCTA initiative amends the State Universities Article of the Illinois Pension Code to reduce the amount of service credit an employee may establish for unused sick leave to 2 years from the current practice of allowing unlimited unused sick leave. An ambiguously written statute permits SURS to award unlimited service credit for unused sick leave.

HB 4923 Increase in No-Bid Threshold (Black)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Status: Held in committee

This ICCTA bill amends the Illinois Public Community College Act to increase the dollar amounts of thresholds under which certain contracts may be awarded without competitive bidding, from \$10,000 to \$15,000 for purchasing and from \$15,000 to \$25,000 for construction related.

HB 6622 GED Testing Appropriation (Black)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Status: Held in committee

HB 6622 is a "shell bill" (legislation that does not contain any substantive language) designed to appropriate dollars from the General Revenue Fund to the Illinois Community College Board for the high school equivalency testing program.

HB 6625 Transfer of GED Testing Authority to ICCB (Black)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Status: Held in committee

Amends the School Code and the Public Community College Act. Transfers all powers and duties of the Illinois State Board of Education and State Superintendent of Education with regard to high school equivalency testing under the School Code to the Illinois Community College Board.

HB 6843 Selection of Architectural Services (Granberg)

ICCTA Position: OPPOSE

Status: Held in committee

Amends the Capital Development Board Act to provide that community college districts are subject to the Local Government Professional Services Selection Act and that universities and the Illinois Community College Board are subject to the Architectural, Engineering, and Land Surveying Qualifications Based Selection Act. Amends the Architectural, Engineering, and Land Surveying Qualifications Based Selection Act to provide that selection shall be conducted by the Capital Development Board on behalf of universities and the Illinois Community College Board unless waived by the Executive Director of CDB. Amends the Local Government Professional Services Selection Act (I) to provide that selection shall be conducted by the Capital Development Board on behalf of political subdivisions, including without limitation community college districts, for projects that are funded in whole or in part by the State unless waived by the Executive Director of CDB and (ii) to remove an exception to the requirements of the Act when the political subdivision "has a satisfactory relationship for services with one or more firms."

SB 3106 Open Meetings Act – Electronic Attendance (Viverito)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Status: Held in committee

Amends the Open Meetings Act to allow members of a public body to attend a meeting by electronic means, subject to certain limitations. Requires the physical presence of the person testifying in any contested case, as defined in the Illinois Administrative Procedure Act, unless all parties waive the requirement of physical presence. Requires minutes of all public bodies to reflect whether members were physically present or present by electronic means. Provides that a quorum of the members must be physically present for the public body to vote on the issuance of bonds. Allows a public body to adopt rules concerning attendance at meetings by electronic means. Prohibits electronic communication during the course of a meeting of a public body between members of the public body who are physically present at the meeting.

• Call ICCTA at 1-800-454-2282 for legislative updates •