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A View of South State Street in Belvidere Around 1904

A World in Transition from the Ancient Ways to a Constantly Changing World

By David Larson

Coming toward us is an Eldredge Runabout. The Boone County History Museum and a mural depiction of the Eldredge Runabout, located near the scene of this photograph, have memorialized this early automobile in American history.

The photograph was shot in Downtown Belvidere, perhaps at Locust Street, looking from South State Street to North State Street sometime just after the dawning of the new century in what appears to have been the dead days of summer. We can establish the date by noting the horse-drawn wagon on the right side of the street, the automobile on the left, and the streetcar further down State Street going toward the Kishwaukee River. The telephone and electrical wires had long been strung back in the 1880s. The photograph marks the dawning of a new day and the passing of an old way. The street was still dirt, but soon would be paved.

The scene here was from deep within the summer months of that year, with the trees

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A view of South State Street in Belvidere sometime between 1903 and 1906

Lawmakers Mull Betting on Internet Gambling While Existing Industry Warns It'll Fold

Proposal to legalize 'iGaming' comes as Illinois' still-growing sports betting market turns 5

By Hannah Meisel Capitol News Illinois

In the years since the COVID-19 pandemic temporarily shut down Illinois casinos, video gambling terminals, horse racing and professional sports — just days after legal sports betting went live — the state's gambling industry has seen an explosion in growth.

Even the state lottery, which was launched 50 years ago, has experienced an expansion in recent years after a decade of stagnation. Total state tax revenues from all sources of wagering in Illinois, including the lottery, surpassed \$2 billion in the last fiscal year.

Against this backdrop, some lawmakers are pushing for Illinois to join eight other states that have legalized internet gambling, also known as iGaming. It's a tempting possibility in a year when the state is facing a possible budget deficit and uncertainty about normally solid sources of federal funding as President Donald Trump and congressional Republicans are cheering for cuts.

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Democratic Lawmaker Grows Concerned With Use Of AI in Health Care

Bills dealing with AI in online therapy, health insurance advance in House committees

By Jade Aubrey Capitol News Illinois

Illinois lawmakers are growing concerned with the use of artificial intelligence in health care.

Rep. Bob Morgan, D-Deerfield, is sponsoring two bills that would place restrictions on the use of AI in online therapy services as well as AI use in decision-making processes that determine a person's health insurance coverage.

"Artificial intelligence is here, whether we like it or not," Morgan said in an email to Capitol News Illinois. "When it comes to health insurance, the stakes are simply too high to allow unchecked automation to dictate decisions that could determine whether someone receives life-saving treatment or faces financial ruin."

One of Morgan's sponsored bills — House Bill 1806, which deals with the use of AI in online mental health services — passed unanimously out of the House Health Care Licensing Committee on Wednesday.

If enacted, the measure would prohibit licensed mental health professionals from using AI to assist in providing support in therapy or psychotherapy sessions.

Morgan said the National Association of Social Workers has received an increasing number of reports from users of these online services, who say they were not aware they were interacting with AI chat-bots during their sessions.

"The introduction of AI into mental health care presents, I think, pretty obvious but certainly serious risks that can lead to dangerous, even life-threatening consequences," he said in the

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Cell Phone Ban Legislation Clears Senate Committee

Advocates say bans are shown to improve school climate

By Peter Hancock Capitol News Illinois

Legislation that would prohibit public school students from using cell phones and other wireless communication devices during class time cleared a Senate committee Tuesday and could soon be considered by the full Senate.

It's a policy change that Gov. JB Pritzker called for in his State of the State address in February and one that has been gaining popularity in recent years throughout the United States.

According to the health policy website KFF.org, at least nine other states have adopted statewide policies limiting or banning the use of cell phones in schools. Elsewhere, even in the absence of a statewide policy, individual districts have begun acting on their own, including Peoria Public Schools, which implemented its own ban this year.

"This policy has proven effective in reducing distractions, enhancing student focus and better fostering social interaction," Peoria Superintendent Sharon Desmoulin-Kherat told the committee. "Our data indicates it has also contributed to reducing reduction in bullying and physical fighting, thus creating a safer environment for students."

Read more: Pritzker wants Illinois to be latest state to ban cellphones in classroom

Senate Bill 2427, sponsored by Sen. Christina Castro, D-Elgin, would require all school boards to adopt policies prohibiting the use of wireless communication devices during instructional time. That would include any wireless device such as cell phones, laptops, tablets and gaming devices that can provide voice, messaging or other data

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By Jade Aubrey Capitol News Illinois

Illinois lawmakers are growing concerned with the use of artificial intelligence in health care.

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

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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"The introduction of AI into mental health care presents, I think, pretty obvious but certainly serious risks that can lead to dangerous, even life-threatening consequences," he said in the committee hearing. "Again, it's probably obvious the most that AI does not have the ability to exercise ethical judgment or recognize when a person is in crisis, or adapt responses based on non-verbal cues and emotional tone — all the things that we're training our health care professionals to identify."

Morgan's other AI-related bill, House Bill 35, would change the way health insurance providers use AI to make decisions about customers' coverage. The bill passed out of the House Insurance Committee on an 11-6 vote on Tuesday.

Morgan outlined the bill's goal as "preventing inappropriate adverse determinations" from being taken against consumers. If HB35 is enacted into law, health insurers would be prohibited from solely relying on AI to deny, reduce or terminate coverage for patients. Instead, those AI-made decisions would have to be "meaningfully reviewed" by a human employee who has the authority to override it.

Morgan said that every major health insurance provider currently is using AI in some way, both helpful and harmful to customers. Providers' use of AI to make coverage decisions for consumers without any oversight by real people is one of those harmful ways, he said.

"As we sit here today, insurance providers are using AI to decide what is going to be our health insurance claims," he said in the committee meeting. "We are completely blind to what that could be and how this be used against us and against our claims."

Late last year, ProPublica published an investigation on EviCore, a company that's used by a large number of major insurance companies in the United States, which found that the AI algorithm EviCore uses to make decisions about consumer's coverage has high denial rates.

"We have already seen large, nationwide insurance providers face class action lawsuits for relying on AI algorithms to deny life-saving care," Morgan said in the email to CNI, making reference to the lawsuits against Cigna, Humana and UnitedHealth Group, filed in recent years for their use of AI-driven decisions.

A lawsuit was filed against UnitedHealth

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Editor:

While watching the Belvidere City Council meeting of March 17, 2025, it was obvious the mayor only wanted his close friends Sandra, Rory, and Clayton to make the motions and 2nds. It gave me a warm, fuzzy feeling. No, it didn't—actually the opposite. It reminded me of why we have elections for our representation. The mayor appointed these three friends. I wonder if others were interviewed.

In the consolidated election currently underway the choices are these three close friends of the mayor, another close friend, and a recruit. The four close friends are running as Independents and the fourth as a Republican. This collaboration will give the mayor a win/win, on anything he wishes for. The five votes of friends, with the mayor's vote breaking the tie. This is how the garbage mandate was passed.

During the Monday meeting the mayor was emphatic about how he is working with ComEd for the need of electricity. He also made sure we all know he worked for ComEd. I wonder in his years at ComEd if he ever rubbed elbows with Mike Madigan. The incumbent mayor definitely wants to control Belvidere as Madigan did the State of Illinois. We need to elect people to represent us as Belvidereans. Not an incumbent with the Madigan/my-way-or-the-highway type of bullying and manipulation.

Mike Carlyle
Ward 1 Alderperson Candidate

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Eldredge

from page 1

leafed in full, and men wearing straw hats instead of beaver. Women were wearing white dresses. Today few, if any, women wear dresses as was the custom a century or more ago, when women would not be seen in anything but a dress. Many women today will only wear a dress when they attend church, a wedding, or a funeral. Oddly enough, each of those activities has a direct connection to a church. However, almost any costume can be seen today in churches, depending upon the faith and the vision of the pastoral leader.

A stream of people originating from the National Sewing Machine Company is heading south. In all likelihood, they are leaving work for the day. Who were the men in the flashy new automobile driving south through Downtown Belvidere? The site of the runabout amongst the citizens may have been commonplace for people living in Belvidere, as the automobile was created and built here. The National built automobiles for other brands before creating the Eldredge. Perhaps it was a test drive of one just completed. It was a time when an automobile was a rare site in the country, but not in Belvidere. Belvidere was the scene of automobile development, and the sky was the limit for Belvidere's future in the industry.

Belvidere's mentality about economics was much different than today's post-proprietorship economy. The National was, by-and-large, a locally owned business. It was a wage labor economy, but it had roots here. Every other business in Belvidere was locally owned then and reflected the pre-industrial free labor economy where most people just worked for themselves, particularly in the rural subsistence economy where everyone was more or less "off the grid."

Even politics on the local level was based on the individual and not the party. It goes without saying that things are very different today. Boone County was then someplace between the frontier and a community in its development.

It was a time of transition in Belvidere and the nation. In that moment, the frontier had closed and the feeling of moving to the Western Frontier to reinvent oneself to prosper or otherwise was over. Americans began to move less, and technology was creating a life experience far different than that which had existed before.

Belvidere had developed both permanence and relevance. In the 19th Century approximately 25 percent of those living in Belvidere moved every year. Many just moved on, and Belvidere was just a moment in their pursuit of the American Dream. Belvidere gradually became a community where transportation and communication created opportunities for the individual to own a business and plant roots. Creative energies were what had built permanence into the settlements in the post-Civil War years. What they accomplished is what we see when we think of Belvidere. The train's arrival in 1852 was the catalyst for the frontier settlement to become a mercantile and industrial center, which had tentacles reaching nationwide.

Dare we ask the question? Does Belvidere have any control over its future today as it did then? If so, what would it look like when you close your eyes?



(above) Javon Bea Hospital's surgical team who have recently performed their first dual leadless pacemaker procedures. A dual leadless pacemaker is a small, wireless device that is implanted directly into the heart to regulate the heartbeat with no wires. Photo Submitted



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Gambling

from page 1

While Illinois already allows sports betting on mobile apps, iGaming includes online casinos and other forms of online gambling that are currently outlawed.

Read more: Legislative revenue estimate more than \$700M lower than Pritzker's proposed budget | Pritzker calls \$55.2B budget 'responsible and balanced' – but warns Trump policies could upend it

State Rep. Edgar Gonzalez, D-Chicago, asked a panel of his fellow House members this week to imagine Illinois facing another financial downturn like the pandemic-recession of 2020 when Trump was finishing out his first term. That year, Illinois faced a major budget shortfall, though federal stimulus money ended up helping the state recover.

"If we had something like iGaming, we would have still had a financial fallback in spite of gross negligence by the first Trump administration," he said Wednesday at a Capitol hearing on his proposal to legalize internet gambling. "Illinois is gambling with its financial future by delaying the adoption of iGaming."

Proponents of Gonzalez's House Bill 3080 point out that plenty of Illinoisans are already gambling on the internet illegally, often facilitated by overseas-based websites.

"Whether or not you choose to pass legislation legalizing iGaming, it is already here," James Hartmann, a lobbyist for sports betting giant FanDuel, told the panel. "Right now, you can take out your phone and in five minutes, be gambling real money slot machines from the app store, unregulated and untaxed."

Hartmann, who was heavily involved in drafting and negotiating Illinois' legalized sports betting framework as a House Democratic staff attorney in 2019, said iGaming sites are "flooding the Illinois market" — and operating unscrupulously.

Meanwhile, FanDuel, Draft Kings and other sports betting platforms must adhere to the law's strict requirements for age checks, problem gambling prevention notifications and other consumer protections to maintain their expensive licenses.

"And so while these bad actors profit, none of it is being captured in tax revenue for the state of Illinois," Hartmann said.

He and others pushing the iGaming bill claim Illinois could collect an additional \$1 billion annually in taxes on internet gambling. The estimate is extrapolated from a 2024 report commissioned by the Sports Betting Alliance, an industry group that represents the four biggest sportsbooks in the U.S.

Those mobile sports betting platforms, which operate in 31 states, Puerto Rico and Washington, D.C., are eager to expand their nascent iGaming business into more states. The Sports Betting Alliance has been running geotargeted social media ads urging iGaming legalization in recent weeks, not just in Illinois but also Maryland.

The analysis from the gambling industry consultancy firm Eilers & Krejcek estimated \$775 million in state tax revenues after five years of legalized iGaming at a nearly 25% tax rate. The \$1 billion figure would reflect a higher tax rate more in line with what larger casinos and sports books pay, especially after a hike in the state's sports betting tax last year. Pritzker last month also floated a tax hike on casino table games to help fill the state's budget gap.

Read more: Democrats tap gaming cash cow to help fill state budget gap

But opponents of legalizing iGaming — including some casinos, video gambling terminal operators and the hospitality groups that represent

the bars and restaurants in which those VGTs have proliferated in the 13 years since video gambling's launch in Illinois — warn the introduction of iGaming would prove a zero-sum game.

Indeed, the General Assembly's fiscal forecasting arm has for years reported on the cannibalization effects that new gambling opportunities have on existing gambling outlets. In its annual study from October, the legislature's Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability continued to chronicle the downfall of Illinois' once-thriving horse racing industry, in addition to noting flagging revenues from the state's legacy riverboat casinos, the oldest of which have been in business for a little more than three decades.

While overall casino revenue in Illinois is up, that success is mainly attributable to the opening of six new casinos provided for under Illinois' massive 2019 gambling expansion law. Additionally, Rivers Casino in Des Plaines, Illinois' first land-based casino that opened in 2011, has also seen continued growth.

Read more: Annual report shows gains in some areas of gambling may come at others' expense

But the state's nine legacy riverboat casinos have seen their revenues decline "for nine consecutive years," according to the report. Visits to casinos in East St. Louis, East Peoria and Joliet's Harrah's Casino have seen significant drop-off. Many of those casinos would be even worse off if it weren't for sportsbook partnerships entered into during the thick of the pandemic, when the type of in-person betting that was provided for under the law was not allowed.

The Illinois Gaming Board opposes the bill due to the agency's own struggles to keep up with its existing regulatory responsibilities and the General Assembly's lack of motion on banning so-called "sweepstakes machines," which are similar to video gambling terminals but operate in a legal gray area.

Read more: Jury convicts politically connected businessman for bribing pair of lawmakers

Jay Keller, a contract lobbyist for Penn Entertainment Inc., noted the company has spent \$600 million in recent years enhancing and expanding its casinos in Aurora, Joliet and Alton — an investment "made with the understanding that Illinois' gaming landscape would remain stable," he told lawmakers.

"The economic impact of iGaming is uncertain, but the potential negative consequences are clear: The proliferation of online gaming could reduce in-person casino traffic, threatening jobs, lowering the economic benefits to local communities and ultimately discouraging future investments in the state," he said.

Penn also operates video gambling terminals throughout Illinois and sportsbooks at all three of its casinos, including mobile sports betting via the casino in Aurora. Keller noted that roughly half of Illinois casinos are on Penn's side opposing iGaming, while the other half are in favor of legalizing it.

Though one major labor union, the Chicago-based International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 134, supports legalizing iGaming, another influential union is opposed.

Marc Poulos, the executive director of the labor-management group for the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 150, warned against any move that might jeopardize funding for state infrastructure projects, which provide jobs for Local 150 members.

"Every study that we have looked at shows that iGaming would cannibalize existing gaming positions, mainly video gaming terminals," he told the panel.

A study published last month, commissioned by the National Association Against iGaming, warned that if Illinois legalizes internet gambling, the state could lose \$252.5 million in direct casino tax revenues and 4,733 jobs, taking into account the gambling industry's adjacent hospitality industry.

Though the study concluded that land-based casinos underperformed expected growth in states where iGaming has been legalized, internet gambling proponents disagree.

"iGaming brings new customers to casinos," Sports Betting Alliance President Jeremy Kudon told lawmakers, saying the threat of cannibalization has become a mythical "Loch Ness Monster."

Another report the Sports Betting Alliance commissioned last year found that of Illinois survey respondents who participated in either illegal iGaming or placed online bets while traveling to a state where it's legal, 23% said they visited casinos more after they began iGaming. However, 54% said the frequency of their casino visits stayed the same, while 19% said they didn't go as much.

Additionally, Michael Pollock of the New Jersey-based consultancy firm Spectrum Gaming Group said "two immutable laws of human nature" will still attract people to casinos.

"One is that people like games of chance, and two is that people enjoy being in social settings," he said.

Trevor Hayes, an executive with Caesars Sportsbook, which operates in partnership with Elgin's Grand Victoria Casino, agreed, saying his company has found iGaming is "actually a marketing tool" for brick-and-mortar casinos to "find new customers — younger customers."

But that's exactly what some opponents worry will happen, creating a new class of problem gamblers.

A Tulchin Research survey published this week of 800 Illinois voters last month found 71% believed online gambling is more addictive than betting at casinos or other brick-and-mortar establishments. Seventy-seven percent of survey respondents agreed with the sentiment that "lawmakers should look for better ways to balance the state budget than expanding mobile gambling in Illinois."

The October report from the legislature's economic forecasting commission estimated that in the last five fiscal years, the per-capita amount spent on gambling and lottery tickets in Illinois has increased from \$325 to \$560 annually, driven primarily by the explosion of video gambling terminals in Illinois and sports betting.

Illinois' sports betting market is now second in the nation behind New York in terms of overall sportsbook revenue, according to a report published last month by the American Gaming Association.

Continued on Page 5

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Foster Statement on The Dismantling of The Department of Education

Press Release

Congressman Bill Foster issued the following statement in response to President Trump's executive order aimed at dismantling the Department of Education:

"Trump's executive order dismantling the Department of Education is reckless, illegal, and destined to fail in the courts. Only an Act of Congress can abolish a federal agency that Congress itself created.

"Gutting the Department of Education would hurt children at all levels—particularly in rural and low-income schools, as well as students with disabilities. Teachers would be laid off, class sizes would increase, and access to college and job training would disappear. Chaos would ensue for students who rely on federal student loans.

"We also must not forget that the Department of Education was founded to ensure the protection of students' civil rights in response to school segregation. My father wrote much of the enforcement language behind the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that desegregated southern schools. In Congress, I will keep fighting to ensure that our education system remains a tool for opportunity, not exclusion."

That is why I'm writing this letter to the editor today. I'm asking that you consider voting for a man of character who is running for Mayor of Belvidere in the upcoming April 1st election. I'm asking that you consider voting for Clint Morris, the current Mayor of Belvidere.

I've known Mayor Morris for almost 4 years now and have had the chance to sit down with him one and one and hear his views about not only being an effective Mayor of Belvidere, but also how to be a person who puts integrity and honesty as a top priority in his life. While I believe Mayor Morris has achieved great success in bringing new businesses to Belvidere and expanding the local economy, I believe his greatest accomplishment has been in his ability to put the people of Belvidere as his top priority, as opposed to the needs of any political party. That is why Mayor Morris is running as an Independent candidate. As an Independent, he can focus on the what benefits the citizens of Belvidere the most, not on what benefits any political party. In this day and age of extreme political party politics it is refreshing to see a candidate who still puts people ahead of political party.

So, in conclusion I ask that you consider voting for Mayor Clint Morris for Mayor of Belvidere on April 1st. I believe Belvidere is fortunate to have a man of his character working for the people of Belvidere.

Respectfully,
Robert R. Ryder, former Marine Sgt., Operation Desert Storm Veteran, former Superintendent of the Veterans Assistance Commission of Boone County.

Gambling

from page 4

And Illinois' video gambling terminal industry is far and away the largest of any state with legal VGTs; a whopping 48,176 machines were in operation at bars, restaurants, dedicated gaming cafes, truck stops and the state fairgrounds in Springfield as of the end of last fiscal year in June.

Ivan Fernandez, director of the Illinois Gaming Machine Operators Association, which represents the VGT industry, warned that, unlike video gambling and casinos, iGaming presents a more dangerous risk of addiction. He urged lawmakers to follow other states that have rejected bids for iGaming legalization in recent years.

"They declined to authorize putting online casino gambling at people's fingertips on millions of cellphones, tablets and computers available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, when people are most vulnerable," he said. "When they're alone or in isolation and within the close reach of minors, without regard for local authority or any reasonable time or spending limits."

This week's hearing yielded no vote, as it was purely informational, but the House Gaming Committee's chair, state Rep. Dan Didech, D-Buffalo Grove, indicated there would be a long road ahead for any iGaming legalization bid, calling opponents' concerns "well-founded."

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.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR


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BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS
CONSOLIDATED ELECTION**

APRIL 1, 2025

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS SPECIMEN BALLOT IS A TRUE AND CORRECT COPY OF THE OFFICES AND CANDIDATES TO BE VOTED IN THE CONSOLIDATED ELECTION TO BE HELD IN BOONE COUNTY ON APRIL 1st, 2025.

Julie A. Bliss

JULIE A. BLISS, COUNTY CLERK
BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS

MUNICIPAL	
CITY OF BELVIDERE	
FOR MAYOR (VOTE FOR ONE)	
No Candidate	DEMOCRATIC
<input type="radio"/> Frederic C. Breerton	REPUBLICAN
<input type="radio"/> John Albertini	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Clinton Morris	INDEPENDENT
FOR CITY CLERK (VOTE FOR ONE)	
No Candidate	DEMOCRATIC
<input type="radio"/> Erica Bluege	REPUBLICAN
FOR CITY TREASURER (VOTE FOR ONE)	
No Candidate	DEMOCRATIC
<input type="radio"/> Mary Volkey	REPUBLICAN
FOR ALDERPERSON WARD ONE (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Michael T. Carlyle	DEMOCRATIC
No Candidate	REPUBLICAN
<input type="radio"/> Clayton Stevens	INDEPENDENT
FOR ALDERPERSON WARD TWO (For a 4-year term) (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Michael Hart	DEMOCRATIC
No Candidate	REPUBLICAN
<input type="radio"/> Jerry L. Hoiness	INDEPENDENT
FOR ALDERPERSON WARD TWO (For an unexpired 2-year term) (VOTE FOR ONE)	
No Candidate	DEMOCRATIC
No Candidate	REPUBLICAN
<input type="radio"/> Rory B. Peterson	INDEPENDENT
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<input type="radio"/> Michael Yates	DEMOCRATIC
No Candidate	REPUBLICAN
<input type="radio"/> Sandra Gramkowski	INDEPENDENT
FOR ALDERPERSON WARD FOUR (VOTE FOR ONE)	
No Candidate	DEMOCRATIC
<input type="radio"/> Matthew Fleury	REPUBLICAN
FOR ALDERPERSON WARD FIVE (VOTE FOR ONE)	
No Candidate	DEMOCRATIC
<input type="radio"/> Chris Montalbano	REPUBLICAN
CITY OF LOVES PARK	
FOR MAYOR (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Greg Jury	INDEPENDENT
FOR CITY CLERK (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Bob Burden	INDEPENDENT
FOR CITY TREASURER (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> John C. Danielson	INDEPENDENT

FOR ALDERPERSON WARD FIVE (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Frank Laudicina	INDEPENDENT
VILLAGE OF CALEDONIA	
FOR VILLAGE PRESIDENT (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Mike Gillett	
FOR VILLAGE CLERK (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Betsy Bowron-Komerska	
FOR VILLAGE TREASURER (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Mary Ryan	
FOR VILLAGE TRUSTEE (For a 4-year term) (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN FOUR)	
<input type="radio"/> Jamie Harnish	
<input type="radio"/> Lori Axtel	
<input type="radio"/> Joanne Nicholson	
<input type="radio"/> Omar Olivar	
FOR VILLAGE TRUSTEE (For an unexpired 2-year term) (VOTE FOR ONE)	
No Candidate	
VILLAGE OF CAPRON	
FOR VILLAGE PRESIDENT (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Steven Bank	INDEPENDENT
FOR VILLAGE TRUSTEE (For a 4-year term) (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN FIVE)	
<input type="radio"/> Rachael Agee	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Linda Wohlfarth	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Kim McMahan	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Glenn Pinnau	INDEPENDENT
VILLAGE OF CHERRY VALLEY	
FOR VILLAGE PRESIDENT (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> David Schroeder	INDEPENDENT
FOR VILLAGE TRUSTEE (For a 4-year term) (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN THREE)	
<input type="radio"/> Lawrence M. Neville	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Brandi Pearse	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Nancy L. Belt	INDEPENDENT
FOR VILLAGE TRUSTEE (For an unexpired 2-year term) (VOTE FOR ONE)	
No Candidate	
MUNICIPAL	
VILLAGE OF POPLAR GROVE	
FOR VILLAGE PRESIDENT (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Owen Costanza	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Kristi Richardson	INDEPENDENT
FOR VILLAGE CLERK (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Karri Miller	INDEPENDENT
FOR VILLAGE TRUSTEE (For a 4-year term) (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN THREE)	
<input type="radio"/> Sinae Hubbard	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Dan Cheek	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Mark Vance	INDEPENDENT
FOR VILLAGE TRUSTEE (For an unexpired 2-year term) (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> David Allgood	INDEPENDENT
VILLAGE OF TIMBERLANE	
FOR VILLAGE PRESIDENT (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Stephen M. Rapp	

FOR VILLAGE CLERK (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Debra K. Marnar	
FOR VILLAGE TRUSTEE (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN THREE)	
<input type="radio"/> Darcy Hills	
<input type="radio"/> Paul D. Loner	
TOWNSHIPS	
BELVIDERE TOWNSHIP	
FOR TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR (VOTE FOR ONE)	
No Candidate	DEMOCRATIC
<input type="radio"/> Bernard O'Malley	REPUBLICAN
FOR TOWNSHIP CLERK (VOTE FOR ONE)	
No Candidate	DEMOCRATIC
<input type="radio"/> Michelle Dixon	REPUBLICAN
FOR TOWNSHIP ASSESSOR (VOTE FOR ONE)	
No Candidate	DEMOCRATIC
<input type="radio"/> Michael A. St. Angel	REPUBLICAN
FOR TOWNSHIP HIGHWAY COMMISSIONER (VOTE FOR ONE)	
No Candidate	DEMOCRATIC
<input type="radio"/> Michael T. Dixon	REPUBLICAN
FOR TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN FOUR)	
No Candidate	DEMOCRATIC
<input type="radio"/> Richard H. Nelson	REPUBLICAN
<input type="radio"/> Daniel K. Snow	REPUBLICAN
<input type="radio"/> Kathy L. Grover	REPUBLICAN
<input type="radio"/> Robert E. Turner	REPUBLICAN
BONUS TOWNSHIP	
FOR TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Darrel W. Davis	INDEPENDENT
FOR TOWNSHIP CLERK (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Sarah Osterberg	INDEPENDENT
FOR TOWNSHIP HIGHWAY COMMISSIONER (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Michael Karlson	INDEPENDENT
FOR TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN FOUR)	
<input type="radio"/> Todd Walberg	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Brad Peters	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Russell Houk	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Dan Mickey	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Benjamin Vance	INDEPENDENT
BOONE TOWNSHIP	
FOR TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Norman Stimes	INDEPENDENT
FOR TOWNSHIP CLERK (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Dawn Klein	INDEPENDENT
FOR TOWNSHIP ASSESSOR (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Glen Gratz	INDEPENDENT
FOR TOWNSHIP HIGHWAY COMMISSIONER (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Brian Camp	INDEPENDENT
FOR TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN FOUR)	
<input type="radio"/> Chad Cunningham	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Carlo Ferretti	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> David Tinberg	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Jason Hagberg	INDEPENDENT
CALEDONIA TOWNSHIP	
FOR TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Valerie Alt	INDEPENDENT
FOR TOWNSHIP CLERK (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Theresa Balk	INDEPENDENT

FOR TOWNSHIP HIGHWAY COMMISSIONER (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Jeff Morelock	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Adam McCauley	INDEPENDENT
FOR TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN FOUR)	
<input type="radio"/> Don Ward	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Tracy Rangel	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Dennis Luckey	INDEPENDENT
FLORA TOWNSHIP	
FOR TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Donald J. Banks	INDEPENDENT
FOR TOWNSHIP CLERK (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Kenneth E. Freeman	INDEPENDENT
FOR TOWNSHIP ASSESSOR (VOTE FOR ONE)	
No Candidate	
FOR TOWNSHIP HIGHWAY COMMISSIONER (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Brad J. Stark	INDEPENDENT
FOR TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN FOUR)	
<input type="radio"/> Debra S. Butenschoen	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Kerry Lee	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Todd C. Aves	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Andrew Paulson	INDEPENDENT
LE ROY TOWNSHIP	
FOR TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Brian Van Laar	INDEPENDENT
FOR TOWNSHIP CLERK (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Jamie Murray	INDEPENDENT
FOR TOWNSHIP HIGHWAY COMMISSIONER (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Robert Donley	INDEPENDENT
FOR TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN FOUR)	
<input type="radio"/> Karen Kenney	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> James Richardson	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Andrew Kitson	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Charles Kastning	INDEPENDENT
TOWNSHIPS	
MANCHESTER TOWNSHIP	
FOR TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Timothy Hall	INDEPENDENT
FOR TOWNSHIP CLERK (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Dalon Boyce	INDEPENDENT
FOR TOWNSHIP HIGHWAY COMMISSIONER (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> William J. Schwarzbach	INDEPENDENT
FOR TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN FOUR)	
<input type="radio"/> Julie Mattelig	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Ken Hildebrandt	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Stanley A. Ellsworth	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Randy Williams	INDEPENDENT
POPLAR GROVE TOWNSHIP	
FOR TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Brian Piskie	INDEPENDENT
FOR TOWNSHIP CLERK (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Andrea Sowers	INDEPENDENT
FOR TOWNSHIP HIGHWAY COMMISSIONER (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Michael A. Wares	INDEPENDENT
FOR TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN FOUR)	
<input type="radio"/> Michael Oliver	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> James Morrison	INDEPENDENT

SPRING TOWNSHIP	
FOR TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Ryan Kufalk	INDEPENDENT
FOR TOWNSHIP CLERK (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Karen L. Smiley	INDEPENDENT
FOR TOWNSHIP HIGHWAY COMMISSIONER (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Chad L. Harbison	INDEPENDENT
FOR TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN FOUR)	
<input type="radio"/> Curt Fowler	INDEPENDENT
<input type="radio"/> Cody Fowler	INDEPENDENT
MULTI-TOWNSHIP ASSESSMENT DISTRICT	
FOR MULTI-TOWNSHIP ASSESSOR (BONUS, SPRING, POPULAR GROVE AND CALEDONIA TOWNSHIPS) (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Kathi Hendrickson	INDEPENDENT
FOR MULTI-TOWNSHIP ASSESSOR (LE ROY AND MANCHESTER TOWNSHIPS) (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Kristina L. Hall	INDEPENDENT
PARKS	
ROCKFORD PARK DISTRICT	
FOR PARK COMMISSIONER (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN TWO)	
<input type="radio"/> Jack Armstrong	
<input type="radio"/> Owen Carter	
<input type="radio"/> Gerald O. Albert	
BELVIDERE TOWNSHIP PARK DISTRICT	
FOR PARK COMMISSIONER (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN THREE)	
<input type="radio"/> Amy Nord	
<input type="radio"/> Daniel Noble	
<input type="radio"/> Amber Rangel	
LIBRARY	
NORTH SUBURBAN PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT	
FOR LIBRARY TRUSTEE (For a 4-year term) (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN FOUR)	
<input type="radio"/> Sara Porter	
<input type="radio"/> Michael P. Dunn	
<input type="radio"/> Deborah Dunnavan-Moreau	
<input type="radio"/> Roger Whitworth	
<input type="radio"/> Jo Elise-Annette Beck	
FOR LIBRARY TRUSTEE (For an unexpired 2-year term) (VOTE FOR ONE)	
<input type="radio"/> Write-in	
CHERRY VALLEY PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT	
FOR LIBRARY TRUSTEE (For a 6-year term) (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN TWO)	
<input type="radio"/> Kenneth Berger	
FOR LIBRARY TRUSTEE (For an unexpired 2-year term) (VOTE FOR ONE)	
No Candidate	
SCHOOLS	
BELVIDERE COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 100	
Instructions to voter: Membership on the board of education is to consist of 4 members from the congressional township that has at least 75% but not more than 90% of the population, and 3 board members from the remaining congressional townships in the school district. ON THE BASIS OF EXISTING BOARD MEMBERSHIP, MEMBERS MAY BE ELECTED IN THE FOLLOWING NUMBERS FROM EACH CONGRESSIONAL TOWNSHIP.	

FOR MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO SERVE AN UNEXPIRED 2-YEAR TERM (VOTE FOR ONE)	
BELVIDERE TOWNSHIP 44N RANGE 03E	
<input type="radio"/> Jeff Diestelmeier	
FOR MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO SERVE A FULL 4-YEAR TERM (VOTE FOR THREE)	
3 shall be elected from Belvidere Township 44N Range 03E BELVIDERE TOWNSHIP 44N RANGE 03E	
<input type="radio"/> Jermaine Pigeo	
<input type="radio"/> Barbi Yunk	
<input type="radio"/> Write-in	
<input type="radio"/> Write-in	
<input type="radio"/> Write-in	
(VOTE FOR ONE)	
1 board members shall be elected from the remaining congressional townships. THE REMAINING CONGRESSIONAL TOWNSHIPS	
<input type="radio"/> Write-in	
SCHOOLS	
HARVARD COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 50	
Instructions to voter: Membership on the board of education is restricted to a maximum of 3 members from any congressional township. ON THE BASIS OF EXISTING BOARD MEMBERSHIP, MEMBERS MAY BE ELECTED IN THE FOLLOWING NUMBERS FROM EACH CONGRESSIONAL TOWNSHIP. NOT MORE THAN 2 MAY BE ELECTED FROM TOWNSHIP 45N RANGE 6E (HARTLAND) NOT MORE THAN 2 MAY BE ELECTED FROM TOWNSHIP 45N RANGE 5E (DUNHAM) NOT MORE THAN 2 MAY BE ELECTED FROM TOWNSHIP 46N RANGE 5E (CHEMUNG) NOT MORE THAN 3 MAY BE ELECTED FROM TOWNSHIP 46N RANGE 6E (ALDEN) NOT MORE THAN 3 MAY BE ELECTED FROM TOWNSHIP 46N RANGE 4E (LEROY)	
FOR MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO SERVE A FULL 4-YEAR TERM (VOTE FOR A TOTAL OF FOUR)	
TOWNSHIP 46N RANGE 5E (CHEMUNG)	
<input type="radio"/> Rubi Vega	
<input type="radio"/> Renee Gonzalez	
<input type="radio"/> Diana Bird	
TOWNSHIP 45N RANGE 5E (DUNHAM)	
<input type="radio"/> Caren S. Mackenzie	
<input type="radio"/> William "Willie" Perez	
HIAWATHA COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 426	
Instructions to voter: Membership on the board of education is to consist of 4 members from the congressional township that has at least 75% but not more than 90% of the population, and 3 board members from the remaining congressional townships in the school district. ON THE BASIS OF EXISTING BOARD MEMBERSHIP, MEMBERS MAY BE ELECTED IN THE FOLLOWING NUMBERS FROM EACH CONGRESSIONAL TOWNSHIP.	
FOR MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO SERVE AN UNEXPIRED 2-YEAR TERM (VOTE FOR ONE)	
No Candidate	
FOR MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO SERVE A FULL 4-YEAR TERM (VOTE FOR THREE)	
2 shall be elected from Franklin township 42N range 3E FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP 42N RANGE 3E	
<input type="radio"/> Ralph Ziegler	
<input type="radio"/> Andrew Lyons	
<input type="radio"/> Norma Rutigliano	

FOR MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO SERVE A FULL 4-YEAR TERM (VOTE FOR ONE)

1 board members shall be elected from the remaining congressional townships.

THE REMAINING CONGRESSIONAL TOWNSHIPS

Timothy S Hall

KINNIKINNICK COMMUNITY CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 131

FOR MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO SERVE A FULL 4-YEAR TERM (VOTE FOR FOUR)

David L. Young
 Joseph Tomilonus
 Crystal Draffkom
 Heather Johnson
 Lindsey Swanson

NORTH BOONE COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 200

Instructions to voter: Membership on the board of education is restricted to a maximum of 3 members from any congressional township.

ON THE BASIS OF EXISTING BOARD MEMBERSHIP, MEMBERS MAY BE ELECTED IN THE FOLLOWING NUMBERS FROM EACH CONGRESSIONAL TOWNSHIP.

NOT MORE THAN 2 MAY BE ELECTED FROM TOWNSHIP 46N RANGE 03E
 NOT MORE THAN 2 MAY BE ELECTED FROM TOWNSHIP 45N RANGE 04E
 NOT MORE THAN 3 MAY BE ELECTED FROM TOWNSHIP 45N RANGE 03E
 NOT MORE THAN 2 MAY BE ELECTED FROM TOWNSHIP 46N RANGE 04E

MANCHESTER 46N RANGE 03E
 Sarah Meyer

BOONE 45N RANGE 04E
 Judith Babcock-Hutchinson
 Nancy Grimme Schilling

CALEDONIA 45N RANGE 03E
 Russell O'Donnell

LEROY 46N RANGE 04E
 Tom Kinser
 Write-in

Write-in

ROCKFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 205

DISTRICT D FOR MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO SERVE A FULL 4-YEAR TERM (VOTE FOR ONE)

Nicole Bennett
 Fort A. Zackary III

HONONEGAH COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 207

Instructions to voter: Thirty percent (30%) or more of the taxable property of this high school district is located in the unincorporated territory of the district, therefore, at least two board members shall be residents of the unincorporated territory.

ON THE BASIS OF EXISTING BOARD MEMBERSHIP, MEMBERS MAY BE ELECTED FROM ANY AREA OR AREAS.

FOR MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO SERVE A FULL 4-YEAR TERM (VOTE FOR FOUR)

Josh Ballard
 Eric Flohr
 Bob Geddeis
 Gayle Haab
 Anthony Jenkins
 Darrell Polfliet

COLLEGE

KISHWAUKEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT NO. 523

FOR TRUSTEES OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT TO SERVE A 6-YEAR TERM (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN TWO)

David Lilja
 Catherine Hopkins

ROCK VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT NO. 511

FOR TRUSTEES OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT TO SERVE A 6-YEAR TERM (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN THREE)

Paul Gorski
 Jerry Simmons
 Gloria Cardenas Cudia
 Richard Kennedy
 Jenna Goldsmith

FOR TRUSTEES OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT TO SERVE A 6-YEAR TERM (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN THREE)

Paul Gorski
 Jerry Simmons
 Gloria Cardenas Cudia
 Richard Kennedy
 Jenna Goldsmith

McHENRY COUNTY COLLEGE DISTRICT NO. 528

FOR TRUSTEES OF THE COUNTY COLLEGE DISTRICT TO SERVE A 6-YEAR TERM (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN THREE)

Linnea Kooistra
 Tess Reinhard
 Tom Allen

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE REGION

FOR MEMBERS OF THE REGIONAL BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES (DeKALB COUNTY) (Not more than one may serve from the same congressional township) (Full six year term) (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN TWO)

No Candidate

FOR MEMBERS OF THE REGIONAL BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES (DeKALB COUNTY) (For an unexpired four year term) (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN TWO)

No Candidate

FOR MEMBERS OF THE REGIONAL BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES (DeKALB COUNTY) (For an unexpired two year term) (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN TWO)

No Candidate

FOR MEMBERS OF THE REGIONAL BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES (McHENRY COUNTY) (Full six year term) (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN TWO)

No Candidate

FOR MEMBERS OF THE REGIONAL BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES (BOONE AND WINNEBAGO COUNTIES) (Full 6-year term) (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN TWO)

Bob Walberg
 Boone County

FOR MEMBERS OF THE REGIONAL BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES (BOONE AND WINNEBAGO COUNTIES) (For an unexpired 4-year term) (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN TWO)

David Carlson
 Winnebago County

Tosca DeGennaro
 Boone County

FOR MEMBERS OF THE REGIONAL BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES (BOONE AND WINNEBAGO COUNTIES) (For an unexpired 2-year term) (VOTE FOR ONE)

Richard Beuth

FIRE

BOONE COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT NO. 2

FOR TRUSTEE (For a 6-year term) (VOTE FOR ONE)

Brent A. Bryan
 Write-in

FOR TRUSTEE (NEW TRUSTEES) (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN TWO)

Richard H. Nelson
 James P. Dooley

FOR TRUSTEE (For an unexpired 2-year term) (VOTE FOR ONE)

Matthew Zickert
 Dennis Dovenmuehle

NORTH BOONE COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT NO. 3

FOR TRUSTEE (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN TWO)

Glen Guthrie
 Susan Schmalen

BOONE COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT NO. 4

FOR TRUSTEE (For a 6-year term) (VOTE FOR ONE)

No Candidate

FOR TRUSTEE (For an unexpired 4-year term) (VOTE FOR ONE)

Karen Kenney

MANCHESTER RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT NO. 5

FOR TRUSTEE (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN THREE)

Royce Harnish
 Michael Clarke
 Brian Jaenecke
 Gene Wagner
 Austin Schwarzbach

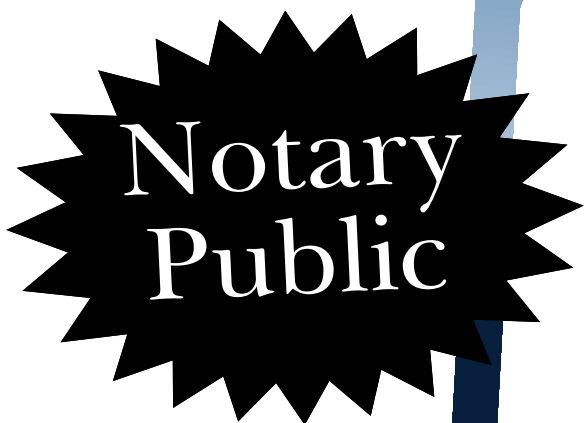


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AI from page 2
Group in 2023, and a decision was reached just last month. Five of the seven counts were dismissed, Health Finance reported.

Morgan's bill aims to curb this practice.

"By ensuring that human review is required for AI-driven decisions that negatively impact patients, we are upholding fairness, accountability, and consumer protection in a system that affects millions of lives," he said in an email. "This is not about rejecting innovation — it's about making sure technology serves people, not the other way around."

HB35 has opposition from three agencies, including the Illinois Chamber of Commerce, American Health Insurance Professionals, and the ACLU of Illinois. However, the bill has support from 10 others, including the Illinois State Medical Society, Illinois Pharmacists Association, and the Illinois Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers.

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.

Foster Introduces Legislation To Promote Political Spending Transparency For Investors

Press Release

Congressman Bill Foster (D-IL) announced the reintroduction of the Shareholder Political Transparency Act. This legislation would amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to require publicly traded companies to make quarterly disclosures to their shareholders detailing the types and amounts of political spending they engage in, ensuring greater transparency for investors and the public.

"Political contributions from publicly held companies should not be a secret, especially to people who invest their hard-earned money in them," said Foster. "This legislation is a common-sense measure that would provide investors with all the facts necessary to make informed decisions about where to put their money."

The Shareholder Political Transparency Act is cosponsored by Reps. Nydia Velázquez (D-NY), Joyce Beatty (D-OH), Sean Casten (D-IL), Chuy García (D-IL), Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), and Jim Himes (D-CT).

Cell Phones

from page 1

communication between two or more parties. However, it would not include school-issued devices or devices that students are required to possess or use for educational purposes.

The district policies would, at a minimum, prohibit the use of those devices during instructional time. But the policies would also have to allow exceptions that allow students to use them during emergencies or in response to an imminent threat to someone's health or safety.

The policies must also provide exceptions if the devices are needed as part of an individual educational plan for a student with disabilities, or if they are needed for medical care.

The new policies would have to be in place in time for the 2026-27 academic year.

Castro said she's aware that some districts have

already adopted policies that are stricter than the standards set forth in the bill, while other districts have not yet adopted any type of limitation on cell phone use.

"This is a floor," she said. "So if school districts want to get more aggressive, like saying they don't want elementary school students to have cell phones, they can. But again, this is the floor. The reason this policy is coming forward is because not everyone's been creating this policy. This sets a standard that all school districts have to follow."

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Illinois Human Trafficking Bill Focuses Cross-Agency Coordination, Victims

Leaders expect human trafficking numbers in state are higher than reports indicate

By Bridgette Fox *Capitol News Illinois*

A Senate committee passed a bill this week that would give specialized training on human trafficking and establish coordination across multiple state agencies and partners.

Human trafficking is defined by the U.S. Justice Department as "a crime that involves compelling or coercing a person to provide labor or services, or to engage in commercial sex acts."

Senate Bill 2323 follows multiple recommendations from the state Joint Human Trafficking Working Group formed in 2023. The recommendations included victim screening, multi-agency coordination, victim-focused training and more.

Advocate and Chicago-native Brenda Myers-Powell, who was a victim of human trafficking for 25 years starting as a child, spoke at the state Capitol on Wednesday in support of the bill.

"I wish someone had recognized the signs when I was vulnerable," Myers-Powell said. "The expanded screening for youth in state care could have identified my situation before it escalated. The creation of standards of care means survivors like me won't have inconsistent, sometimes retraumatizing responses I encountered."

If the bill is implemented, multiple state agencies would have to make new units that work across jurisdictions and have specialized training to work with victims and potential future victims.

"As a transportation hub, Illinois ranks among the highest in the number of human trafficking

cases in the whole United States," Sen. Julie Morrison, D-Deerfield, the bill's lead sponsor, said Wednesday.

The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, one of the agencies involved in the bill, would be required to maintain a human trafficking unit, which has the main goal of helping victims with case management and other services.

In a Senate committee hearing Tuesday, Illinois State Police Director Brendan Kelly said there were fewer than 600 victims of human trafficking reported to state agencies between 2021 and 2023. Another 966 possible cases of child trafficking were reported to DCFS over the same period. But Kelly said the reported numbers are likely only a fraction of the actual cases.

"We know that human trafficking exists in our state but is sometimes unrecognized, as victims aren't identified, and underlying crimes are unreported," Kelly said Wednesday.

Kelly said law enforcement knows how to recognize "the bad guy" but is not always as good at recognizing that the person with a perpetrator might be being victimized.

"We have to have a comprehensive approach to this so that ... when we encounter someone who's a victim, that there is a handshake between law enforcement and all these social service providers because it's simply not enough just to hand them a pamphlet or a phone number or just go on to the next bad guy," Kelly said Wednesday. "We have to break the cycle but making sure we're better serving victims."

The bill also repeatedly mentioned improving "victim-centered, trauma-informed" responses from law enforcement and other agencies.

Kelly said training on the complex trauma of human trafficking and taking input from survivors like Myers-Powell will make combatting the problem easier.

The bill now goes to the full Senate for a vote.

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