



104TH ILLINOIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY:

The Illinois General Assembly remains on summer break. Both chambers return in October for a two-week Veto Session.

Upcoming Committee Hearings: The House has scheduled two subject matter hearings for September. The House International Relations, Tourism, and Trade Committee will hold a hearing on September 16 at 12:30 pm in the Bilandic Building in Chicago to discuss how Illinois can respond and lead on tariff policy. The hearing will also be conducted virtually. The hearing can be accessed [here](#).

The House Gun Violence Prevention Committee will hold a hearing on September 22 at 11:00 am in the Bilandic Building in Chicago to discuss gun violence prevention and community violence intervention.

Meanwhile, the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee will hold a virtual committee hearing on September 18 at 10:30 am to discuss [SB 40](#) (Preston/Hoffman), as amended by HA 7, with the effective dates found in [HB 4116](#) (Hoffman). The hearing will be streamed [here](#).

GOVERNOR'S HIGHLIGHTS:

Illinois Insurance Marketplace Rates Released: The Illinois Department of Insurance has announced the [2026 Plan Year](#) rates for the Get Covered Illinois Marketplace. In line with national patterns, Illinois will see an increase in rates. The Department attributes this change to the recent budget bill, which will end the federal enhanced premium tax credits. Health plan options and rates differ by location, but the statewide weighted average rate for individual plans has risen by 28.8 percent compared to the previous year. Read more [here](#).

Federal CMS Investigating Illinois Medicaid Spending: The Trump administration is investigating Medicaid spending in six Democratic-led states—including Illinois—that offer comprehensive health coverage to poor and disabled immigrants without permanent legal status. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services is reviewing payments to ensure there is no waste, fraud, or abuse, focusing on claims for emergency and pregnancy care, as well as other services. California is under scrutiny for overcharging the federal government by at least \$500 million, while Illinois officials have requested more time to provide data but were denied, risking possible funding cuts. State officials stress that thousands rely on these programs for critical care without fear of deportation, and any federal funding reduction would be difficult to offset. Read more [here](#).

State Officials Travel to Tokyo on Trade Mission: State officials from Illinois traveled to Japan for a trade mission, participating in the Midwest U.S.-Japan Association's 55th conference in Tokyo.

Representatives from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and the Illinois Economic Development Corporation attended the conference. Governor JB Pritzker stayed in Illinois to address federal immigration enforcement efforts. The conference aims to strengthen investment and trade ties among over 100 Japanese corporations and their counterparts from nine Midwestern states, with a focus on discussing mutual opportunities and potential collaborations. This annual meeting alternates between the Midwest and Japan to promote ongoing engagement.

Governor Contemplating Executive Action on Hemp: Governor Pritzker indicated this week that he is considering taking executive action to regulate intoxicating hemp. Last year, despite significant lobbying efforts from the Administration and others, the Legislature failed to pass legislation aimed at regulating intoxicating hemp. A spokesperson for the Governor declined to specify what actions he might pursue. Read more [here](#).

OSM Small Equipment Grant Program: The Office of the State Fire Marshal opened the application period for the Small Equipment Grant Program, with \$6 million available for eligible fire departments and ambulance services to purchase small equipment. Applications must be submitted online by November 14, 2025, and grants can be as much as \$26,000 per department. Read more [here](#).

IDNR Accepting Applications for Agricultural Leases: The Illinois Department of Natural Resources will be accepting sealed bids this fall for approximately 20 agricultural lease contracts for the crop years 2026 to 2030. IDNR uses agricultural leases as a strategy to support wildlife populations and enhance recreational opportunities at sites that it owns or manages. These leases are designed to promote ecologically sound farming practices, which will help improve soil health, reduce soil erosion, enhance water quality, and minimize chemical impacts. Read more [here](#).

Gubernatorial Appointments: Governor JB Pritzker appointed the following:

- Aur Beck will serve as a Member of the Energy Workforce Advisory Council.
- Reverend Dr. L. Bernard Jakes will continue to serve as a Member of the Chicago Transit Authority Board.
- Caleb J. Melamed will serve as a Member of the Illinois Gaming Board.

OTHER NEWS:

2026 Election Update: Candidates continue to announce their intentions. Highlights from this week include:

Governor: Former Republican gubernatorial candidate Darren Bailey is expected to announce a second run for Governor. Bailey, a former State Senator, is circulating petitions. Cook County Republican Party Chair Aaron Del Mar is expected to join Bailey as his Lt. Governor running mate. Bailey would face Ted Dabrowski and DuPage County Sheriff James Mendrick in the Republican Primary.

U.S. Senate: Kevin Ryan, a teacher at Chicago Public Schools and a Marine Corps veteran, is running in the Democratic Primary for U.S. Senate. Ryan plans to conduct a grassroots campaign focused on “getting money out of politics.” Instead of raising funds for advertising, he intends to travel across the state in a school bus that he has converted into a mobile campaign office to meet with voters.

16th Congressional District: Ultra-conservative candidate Joh Kitover has announced his intention to challenge Congressman Darin LaHood in the Republican primary for the 16th Congressional District. Kitover, a former Internal Revenue Service employee specializing in project and facilities management, also served for four years in the Army National Guard. He resigned from his job in May to commit to his campaign full-time in central and northwestern Illinois. He currently resides in the Jefferson Park neighborhood of Chicago, which is outside the 16th Congressional District.

9th Congressional District: Jeff Cohen, an experienced economist, entered the crowded field of candidates vying for the Democratic nomination, emphasizing his concerns about affordability in the 9th District. He is a senior adviser at Analysis Group in Chicago, where he's done analysis on the economic feasibility of the 2016 Olympics and Evanston's pension challenges. Cohen also worked for the Department of Justice, where he helped halt a proposed merger of health insurance companies Anthem and Cigna.

14th Senate District: Ahmed Karrar is circulating petitions to run in the Democratic primary in the 14th Senate District, which is currently represented by Senator Emil Jones. Jones is facing a retrial on corruption charges and has not announced his reelection intentions. Although he is circulating petitions, Karrar has not indicated if he plans to challenge Jones in a primary or merely run if the seat opens up.

18th Senate District: Senate President Pro Tempore Bill Cunningham announced he will not seek reelection. He indicated he plans to serve out the remainder of his term. Cunningham was first elected to the House in 2010 and then to the Senate in 2012. He endorsed former State Representative Fran Hurley, who is currently serving as a member of the Labor Relations Board.

8th House District: Latonya Mitts is running for state representative to replace Representative LaShawn Ford who is running for Congress. Mitts is the daughter of Chicago Alderwoman Emma Mitts.

118th House District: Small businessman and former radio host Scott Doody of Anna announced his candidacy for the open seat in the 118th House District. The district is currently represented by Republican Representative Paul Jacobs, who is running for the State Senate.

Cook County Board President: Chicago Alderman Brendan Reilly is challenging Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle in the 2026 Democratic primary.

CGFA August Revenue Report: In August, state revenues experienced a mixed performance, with overall General Funds receipts increasing by \$72 million (2.1%) compared to last year. This growth offset a decline of 0.9% in July, resulting in a modest cumulative gain of 0.5% for the first two months of FY 2026. Key contributors to this growth were the rebound in Personal Income Tax receipts, which rose by \$66 million (3.7%), and Sales Tax receipts, which increased by \$46 million (4.8%).

Transfers-in provided substantial support with an increase of \$189 million, primarily from a \$150 million transfer from the Income Tax Refund Fund. Other notable transfers included contributions from Sports Wagering, Other Transfers, and Gaming Transfers.

Total receipts were tempered by a \$104 million (21.8%) drop in Federal Sources and declines in Corporate Income Tax receipts, which fell by \$30 million (29.4%). Overall, while there were gains in

several areas, the declines in key sectors highlighted the volatility of certain revenue sources. Read more [here](#).

Neville Appointed Chief Justice: Justice P. Scott Neville Jr. was appointed as the next Chief Justice of the Illinois Supreme Court, replacing Mary Jane Theis in October. A Chicago native and former Cook County judge, Neville will be the second Black chief justice in the state's history. He emphasized the importance of public trust in the courts, advocating for accessible justice and support services for litigants, and aims to make Illinois courts a national model for equal justice.

Federal Immigration Enforcement Begins in Chicago: The Department of Homeland Security initiated "Operation Midway Blitz," an immigration enforcement effort in Chicago, targeting individuals with serious criminal records. The operation is named after Katie Abraham, who was killed by an undocumented immigrant. DHS criticized Illinois and Chicago officials for their sanctuary policies, claiming these have made the city a haven for criminal activity. In response, Governor JB Pritzker's office stated they had not received formal notice from the Trump Administration and accused federal officials of using the operation for political theatrics rather than genuine crime-fighting or immigration reform. The Governor's Office emphasized its efforts to keep local leaders and the public informed about developments.