



ILLINOIS STATE SENATOR OF THE 25TH DISTRICT

**Karina Villa, MSW**

State Senator - 25th District

(630) 326 - 9319 (EN)

(630) 326 - 9419 (ES)

**IL 25TH DISTRICT NEWSLETTER: JANUARY 27TH, 2022**



Dear Friend,

I can't believe we've almost made it through the first month of 2022. I hope everyone's had a wonderful month and here's to hoping for rising temperatures after this frigid week.

### **IHDA Affordable Housing Preservation Program Funding**

This program opened on January 18th, 2022, and will allow for existing affordable housing units contracted through IHDA to submit requests to receive subordinate funding for outstanding capital improvement needs on the unit. Must be a current unit with existing income and occupancy restrictions to learn more or apply visit: [Property Owners, Managers, & Other Partners - IHDA](#). The deadline to submit an application for this program is February 25th at 5pm.

### **Become a CASA Advocate**

Thinking of becoming a CASA Volunteer? Have you heard about our mission and not sure what serving as a court-appointed special advocate looks like? Join Illinois CASA for a thirty-minute virtual meeting on February 18th at 12pm to find out more about the role of volunteers who advocate on behalf of children who have experienced abuse and neglect. [Registration](#) is required.

### **Kendall County Small Business Grant**

The [Kendall County Small Business Grant Program](#) is designed to assist small businesses that experienced a loss of revenue due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Qualifying small businesses may be granted up to a maximum of \$25,000. In order to qualify, your small business must be currently operating and have operated in both 2019 and 2020. Email will be the primary form of communication. Funding for the Kendall County

Small Business Grant Program comes from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. If there are any questions, please email [arpagrants@co.kendall.il.us](mailto:arpagrants@co.kendall.il.us). The application will close on February 23rd, 2022.

### **Organization Highlight: Hands of Hope**

My District Outreach Specialist and intern got to tour Fox Valley Hands of Hope, an amazing organization in my district last week. This organization provides absolutely free 6-week grief counseling groups, has a medical supply borrowing program, and does volunteer hospice and nursing home support. To find out more visit: [Fox Valley Hands of Hope | Grief Support based in Geneva IL \(fvhh.net\)](#)



### **Roll up your sleeve.**

The COVID-19 vaccine continues to be the best defense we have against the virus. Everyone aged five and up is now eligible for their first round, and all adults who received their dose more than six months ago can now receive their booster. Do your part — it's not too late to get your initial round of the vaccine or your booster shot. To find an appointment near you, click [here](#).

## **COVID-19 Update: Free At-Home Tests**

Because of omicron's quick transmission, it's important to know if you have it. If you are experiencing any symptoms — which include runny nose, headache, fatigue, sneezing or a sore throat — or have been in contact with someone who has the virus, it is advised you get tested. The most reliable tests are PCRs and you can find a community-based PCR testing site near you, by clicking [here](#). However, it has become apparent that some individuals struggle to find appointments or get time off to test. To make sure everyone has access to testing the federal government has also released free at-home tests with up to four per family. To find out more and receive your tests visit: [COVIDtests.gov - Free at-home COVID-19 tests.](#)

## **Raise your sleeve for National Blood Donor Month**

January is National Blood Donor Month, a time to celebrate the lifesaving impact of blood and platelet donors. Only 37% of the U.S. population is eligible to donate blood, but less than 10% do annually. Meanwhile, about one in seven people entering a hospital need blood. Kick off the year by making a lifesaving donation. Find a blood drive near you [here](#).

## **Energy Assistance for Winter**

Residents are recommended to apply for \$200 million remaining in utility assistance under Gov. JB Pritzker's Help Illinois Families initiative – an expansion of the Low-Income Household Energy Assistance Program under the American Rescue Plan. Designed to support Illinois' most vulnerable families, the program will help cover the cost of heating and energy bills, including expanded benefits provided this year from \$750 to \$1,000, on average per household. To learn more and to fill out an application, visit [helpillinoisfamilies.com](#).

If you are in need of any other type of assistance through these winter months, we encourage you to reach out to our office and we will be happy to link you to resources.

## **Grants Available for Community Projects**

The Federal Economic Development Administration's Economic Adjustment Assistance program will help hundreds of communities across the nation plan, build, innovate and put people back to work through construction or non-construction projects designed to meet local needs. \$500 million is available to fund an estimated 300 projects. There is a rolling deadline with a suggested submission date of March 31, 2022. Webinars and more information can be found [here](#).

## **Driver's License Expiration Extension**

The expiration dates for driver's licenses and identification cards have been extended an additional three months, moving the date from Jan. 1, 2022, to March 31, 2022. This extension does not apply to commercial driver's licenses and CDL learner's permits. This final extension on the expiration dates comes in response to the ongoing push to address increased customer volume caused by the pandemic in Driver Services facilities.

## **What's Next?**

Our office partners with State Representative Maura Hirschauer and co-runs four advisory committees: Environmental and Agriculture, Mental Health, Seniors, and Education. These committees are a limited public forum led by volunteer chairs and seek to create compassionate conversation among the voices of the 25th/49th districts in order to help build our legislative agenda and grow our knowledge in these areas. Our Education Advisory Committee will meet on February 10th at 7pm. Please email [education.49th@gmail.com](mailto:education.49th@gmail.com) to receive the zoom link. My staff and I look forward to hearing from you. I encourage you to reach out to us at 630-326-9319 (English), 630-326-9419 (Spanish) or [constituentservices@senatorvilla.com](mailto:constituentservices@senatorvilla.com).

Be well and stay warm!



Karina Villa, MSW  
State Senator, 25th District