

March 17, 2015



ALLIANCE LEGISLATIVE REPORT (99-39)

GENERAL ASSEMBLY HAS RELAXED SCHEDULE

The Illinois Senate was in session this week and continued the consideration of Senate bills in committees. The House of Representatives has been off the last two weeks and both chambers will be out of session for the next two weeks. The House returns to the Capitol on April 4 while the Senate reconvenes on April 5. Lawmakers are then scheduled to work steadily throughout April and May.

There was no apparent movement among **Governor Bruce Rauner** and the Democrat leadership this week on any budget issues. However, before joining the House of Representatives on Spring Break, the Senate voted 39-18 to appropriate an additional \$4 billion for the current fiscal year. The money in **Senate Bill 2059** would be earmarked for higher education and other state expenditures that have gone without funding during this extended time without a budget.

As has been the case with many other appropriations bills over the past few months, the Senate Democrats stood by SB 2059 saying that it is what was needed to ensure that state services can continue. On the other side of the aisle, Republicans responded that SB 2059 did nothing more than add to the already substantial backlog of bills in the State of Illinois. Senate Bill 2059 will now go the House where it is unknown whether or not it will be acted upon.

But mostly this week, remarks by the Governor and **House Speaker Michael Madigan** were confined to Tuesday's Primary Election where each of the party leaders raised and spent millions of dollars for the candidates of their choice. Only one incumbent was defeated in Tuesday's election when embattled **Representative Ken Dunkin** (D-Chicago) lost to Madigan-backed challenger **Juliana Stratton**.

BILLS ACTION FROM THIS WEEK

SB 230 (Manar, D-Bunker Hill), as amended, requires the Teachers' Retirement System to report to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) the "normal-cost" amount the State contributed for the pensions of the districts' employees, and that amount must be included on the school district's report card. **The amendment was approved** by the Senate Education Committee and was sent to the Senate floor for further consideration.

SB 2440 (Bertino-Tarrant, D-Shorewood), supported by the Alliance as amended, allows for a principal endorsement to be affixed to a Professional Educator License if a person has, among other qualifications, at least four total years of experience teaching or four total years of experience working in the capacity of school support personnel. **The bill was approved** by the Senate Education Committee and was sent to the Senate floor for further consideration.

SB 2835 (Manar) requires vehicles to stop before meeting or overtaking, from either direction, any school bus stopped on a public school highway. **The bill was approved** by the Senate Transportation Committee and was sent to the Senate floor for further consideration.

SB 2908 (Stadelman, D-Rockford) provides that a registration fee does not need to be paid if the licensee is returning to work as a substitute teacher for less than 50% of full-time equivalency for any particular school year. **The bill was approved** by the Senate Education Committee and was sent to the Senate floor for further consideration.

SB 2975 (Cunningham, D-Chicago), subject to appropriation to the ISBE, creates an agriculture education teacher grant program to fund personal services costs for agriculture education teachers in school districts. **The bill was approved** by the Senate Education Committee and was sent to the Senate floor for further consideration.

SB 3042 (Link, D-Gurnee) implements and extends the veterans with disabilities homestead exemption to surviving spouse. **The bill was approved** by the Senate Revenue Committee and was sent to the Senate floor for further consideration.

SB 3314 (Bennett, R-Watseka) further defines eligible properties for a natural disaster homestead exemption. **The bill was approved** by the Senate Revenue Committee and was sent to the Senate floor for further consideration.

SB 3337 (Harmon, D-Oak Park), opposed by the Alliance, changes the calculation for the senior citizens assessment freeze homestead exemption to the greater of (i) the amount of the exemption calculated under the current Statute or (ii) \$2000. **The bill was approved** by the Senate Revenue Committee and was sent to the Senate floor for further consideration.

SB 3367 (Barickman, R-Bloomington) allows Paxton-Buckley-Loda Community Unit School District 10 to issue bonds with an aggregate principal amount not to exceed \$28,500,000 if the voters of the district approve a proposition. **The bill was approved** by the Senate Education Committee and was sent to the Senate floor for further consideration.

This legislative report was written and edited by the lobbyists of the Illinois Association of School Boards to provide information to the members of the organizations that comprise the Statewide School Management Alliance.

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