

2024 Spring Session-Cook County Office of the President Legislative Agenda



- **\$3 million funding request for the Equity & Representation in Health Care scholarship program.**
 - The legislation to create this scholarship was passed two years ago (2022) and the Governor requested and received \$3 million in last year's budget (2023). The money hasn't been distributed yet but we're still requesting another \$3 million into the scholarship fund. This legislation was sponsored by Sen. Hunter and Rep. Lilly
 - This fund provides loan repayment and scholarships to recruit and retain health care professionals to work at Cook County Health and Federally Qualified Health Centers, entities that serve high volumes of Medicaid and uninsured patients.
- **SB2906- HOME RULE COUNTY USE TAX LAW: Sponsor is Sen. Robert Martwick**
 - Currently the Cook County Dept. of Revenue has to wait to collect a vehicle tax for cars purchased outside of Cook County. This legislation will remove the "hidden" tax for these residents and allow IDOR to collect this tax at the time of purchase.
- **HB5285- EFFECTIVE DIVERSION: Sponsor is Rep. Kevin Olickal**
 - This bill clarifies the status of certain special probation programs so that employers, landlords, and others know participation in these diversion programs is not a conviction.
 - The current statute is unclear, leading to a denial of jobs and dismissal for people who choose to participate in a program they were told would give them a second chance.
 - This bill clarifies someone does not have a felony conviction when they are in a special probation program, or after they have successfully completed the program.
 - This bill does not change the qualifications or standards for participating in these programs. It only clarifies the interpretation of an existing process.
- **SB3183/HB5036- ACTIVE EFFORTS TO PROTECT FAMILIES: Senate sponsor is Sen. Lakesia Collins/House sponsor is Rep. Justin Slaughter**
 - Current law makes family separation too easy- especially in lower income and Black communities. At the moment, DCFS is required to make only "reasonable" efforts to

maintain and reunite families. This standard is too low. The Supreme Court has found the right to parent to be a fundamental constitutional right.

- This bill will define for DCFS "active" efforts as efforts that are affirmative, active, thorough, timely and intended to maintain or reunite a child with the child's family.
 - The "active" efforts standard is used in the federal Indian Child Welfare Act to combat racial disparities. These same disparities currently exist in Illinois law.
- **SB2425/HB3791- FOREST PRESERVES- LOCAL CONTROL CONCEAL CARRY: Senate sponsor is Sen. Ram Villivalam/House sponsor is Rep. Kevin Olickal**
 - The Firearm Concealed Carry Act bans conceal carry in a variety of locations, including schools, childcare facilities, public playgrounds, parks, government buildings, libraries, zoos, museums, and certain establishments that sell alcohol.
 - The Firearm Concealed Carry act prohibited conceal carry on "[a]ny real property under the control of the Cook County Forest Preserve District."
 - This legislation would grant forest preserve districts across the state the authority to narrowly regulate conceal carry in high-traffic venue, such as aquatic centers, campgrounds, picnic groves, nature centers, and golf courses.
 - This authority is so narrow, even if the Forest Preserves of Cook County prohibited concealed weapons from all the sites in the bill, only roughly 4% of the land in the Forest Preserves of Cook County would be affected.
 - **SB2698*- WILDLIFE AND DRONE SAFETY: Sponsor is Sen. Julie Morrison (*the vehicle will likely change and a new bill number will be provided)**
 - Amends the Aeronautics Act. Allows a forest preserve or conservation district to enact ordinances regulate unmanned aircraft systems.
 - Federal law preempts state and local drone regulation over 400 feet in altitude.
 - As the only local government body that can regulate drones, the City of Chicago has prohibited the use of drones over any public property, such as parks and beaches.
 - As it stands, families and individuals do not have their right to privacy since drones are able to maneuver through the FPD without and limits. This is a safety hazard for children who visit the Forest Preserves who risk being spied on.
 - The drones also pose a threat to the animals and plant life. They disrupt the migratory patterns for birds, and in other parts of the country, led birds to abandon their nests.
 - The Forest Preserve District is working with the Illinois Association of Park Districts to create one vehicle for this legislation addressing both their concerns. We're hoping our vehicle will be the one chosen.