



COUNTY

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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A Message from the Executive Director



By: Joe McCoy

June marks the turning of more than one season for those in the legislative advocacy sphere. The evolution of the annual legislative calendar coincides with the change of seasons as summer is ushered in to replace spring.

Throughout the spring months ISACo is active within the legislative process. Legislation is filed, bills are reviewed, tracked and analyzed, positions are decided, legislators and staff are contacted, meetings are held, committee hearings are attended, compromises are suggested and thousands of bills meet their fate.

The adjournment of the General Assembly, typically at the end of May, is followed by the “summer season.” Contrary to what some may believe, the adjournment of the spring legislative session does not bring an end to the work of legislative advocacy. It just ushers in another season of advocacy.

Summer is a time for reviewing the work of the General Assembly. For ISACo, this entails a fresh look at the final version of each bill approved by both chambers, identifying which bills merit the sending of letters to the Governor to request support or opposition, making sure our tracked bill system is updated to reflect the legislation passed by both chambers, tracking and reporting on what actions the Governor takes on each bill, assembling reports on these bills and updating the report to reflect bill signings or vetoes, drafting resources for counties that further explain certain new laws and thanking legislators who supported key county issues.

The summer months also provide an opportunity to begin thinking about legislative priorities for the following year. These priorities will be developed through the fall and ultimately introduced for consideration by the General Assembly during winter of the following year.

The broader takeaway is that, while the General Assembly is only in session for five months each year, ISACo’s legislative advocacy program is a 12-month endeavor.

ISACo’s year-round advocacy activities now include the work of our various policy committees. These committees began meeting in 2024 and will become an essential part of county policy development. In addition to reviewing and providing staff with analysis and guidance about key bills that would affect counties, the committees will develop and shape our future annual legislative agendas. We strongly encourage your participation on one or more policy committees. Additional information about the committees and how to join your peers to influence public policy is available within this *County Quarterly*.

It is a pleasure to serve county officials and support the critical work you do on behalf of your residents. As always, please feel welcome to contact me at jmccoy@isacoil.org or 217/679-3368 if I can be of service to you and your county. Thanks.

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2024 Spring Legislative

Session Summary

By: ISACo Staff

The 103rd Illinois General Assembly completed its work for the spring on May 29, 2024.

The scheduled adjournment date was May 24, 2024, but the General Assembly utilized additional “budget hold days” to finalize a budget agreement between the Governor’s Office and Democrat leaders in the House and Senate. The Senate adjourned during the late evening hours on Sunday, May 26, 2024. House members returned to their districts for Memorial Day Weekend and re-convened on Tuesday, May 28, 2024, to take up bills passed over from the Senate. The House completed its work for the spring session during the early morning hours of May 29, 2024.

During the 2024 spring legislative session, 2,969 bills were filed. This excludes resolutions, proposed constitutional amendments and numerous amendments for individual bills.

In total, 465 bills were approved by both chambers. Put another way, 15 percent of introduced House and Senate bills made it to the Governor’s desk.

ISACo tracked 794 bills and took official positions of support or opposition on legislation more than 200 times during the 2024 spring session.

This report provides an initial and general overview of the more consequential and relevant legislation approved during the second year of the 103rd General Assembly.

A more comprehensive report of legislation approved by both chambers that affects or is of interest to counties is available on our website (www.isacoil.org). During the summer months, ISACo will develop useful resources and materials with additional information about issues pertinent to counties.

The General Assembly has concluded its business for the spring and will reconvene for the Fall Veto Session.

State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025 Budget

The SFY 2025 state budget appropriates \$53.074 billion in spending and anticipates revenue collections of \$53.281 billion. The bills are as follows:

- SB 251 (Senator Sims, Jr., D-Chicago/Representative Gordon-Booth, D-Peoria) is the budget appropriations bill. **P.A. 103-0589**
- HB 4959 (Representative Gabel, D-Evanston/Senator Sims, Jr, D-Chicago) is the Budget Implementation (BIMP) bill. **P.A. 103-0588**
- HB 4582 (Representative Rita, D-Blue Island/Senator Harmon, D-Oak Park) is the bonding authority bill. **P.A. 103-0591**

The new state fiscal year begins on July 1, 2024.

STATE SHARED REVENUES

LGDF Remains at SFY 2024 Level

The county share of Local Government Distributive Fund (LGDF) revenue as a percentage of state income tax collections will remain at 6.47 percent of total personal income tax collections in SFY 2025. In other words, there is no change in the percentage share compared to the current state fiscal year.

ISACo will continue to work with our coalition partners to advocate for a restoration of LGDF distributions to the full 10% received by counties and municipalities prior to 2011.

Personal Property Replacement Tax

The General Assembly continued the practice of diverting Personal Property Replacement Tax (PPRT) revenue away from local governments for use by the state for other purposes. The amount of the diversion in the SFY 2025 budget exceeds \$369 million.

Local Government Pass-Thru Funds

Motor Fuel Tax: The SFY 2025 budget appropriates \$77 million in Motor Fuel Tax (MFT) revenue. This is the same amount that was appropriated in the SFY 2024 budget.

Use Tax: The SFY 2025 budget appropriates \$525 million in Use Tax revenue to local governments. The amount of \$600 million was appropriated in SFY 2024.

Video Gaming: The SFY 2025 budget appropriates \$130 million in video gaming revenue. The amount of \$250 million was appropriated in SFY 2024.

KEY OMNIBUS LEGISLATION

The Generally Assembly considered and approved several sweeping omnibus bills during the final days of the spring session. Those of interest to counties are included below.

- HB 3144 (Representative Burke, D-Evergreen Park/Senator Castro, D-Aurora) includes revenue provisions for local governments.
 - As anticipated, the General Assembly eliminated the sales tax on groceries. The tax will be eliminated on January 1, 2026. In lieu of this statewide tax, the bill amends the Illinois Counties Code to provide county boards with authority to impose a 1 percent sales tax on groceries. This local taxing authority becomes effective on or after January 1, 2026. The Illinois Department of Revenue's (IDOR) administrative fee for collecting the grocery tax will be eliminated for future collections.
- HB 4951 (Representative Burke, D-Evergreen Park/Senator Villanueva, D-Chicago) is the omnibus state revenue bill that includes provisions estimated to yield \$865 million in new state revenue.
 - The bill includes a provision creating a task force on county officials' salaries with appointments representing various county offices.
- SB 3268 (Senator Aquino, D-Chicago/Representative Gabel, D-Evanston) is the omnibus Medicaid bill.
- HB 4488 (Representative West, D-Rockford/Senator Morrison, D-Deerfield) is the omnibus elections bill.
- HB 2911 (Representative Ford, D-Chicago/Senator Lightford, D-Maywood) is the omnibus cannabis bill.

HIGHLIGHTED BILLS OF INTEREST TO COUNTIES

The following highlighted bills of interest to counties were approved by both chambers and will next be considered by the Governor.

Small Cell Wireless Facility Reauthorization

HB 4615 (Senator Hastings, D-Frankfort/Representative Walsh, Jr., D-Joliet) amends the Illinois Administrative Procedure Act, the Department of Professional Regulation Law of the Civil Administrative Code of Illinois, the Illinois Grant Funds Recovery Act, the Small Wireless Facilities Deployment Act, the Illinois Municipal Code, the School Code, and the Public Utilities Act. Extends, removes, or modifies repeal dates and other dates. Further amends the Small Wireless Facilities Deployment Act. Provides that an authority may charge an application fee of \$1,000 for each small wireless facility addressed in an application that includes the installation of a new utility pole for such collocation. Provides that an authority may charge recurring rates and application fees up to the amount permitted by the Federal Communication Commission in a specified ruling or in subsequent rulings, orders, or guidance issued by the Federal Communication Commission regarding fees and recurring rates. Provides that an authority may charge an annual recurring rate to collocate a small wireless facility on an authority utility pole located in a right-of-way that equals (i) \$270 per year or (ii) the actual, direct, and reasonable costs related to the wireless provider's use of space on the authority utility pole and makes conforming changes. **(No Position)**

IDOT Studies Available to Local Governments

HB 5138 (Representative Meier, R-Highland/Senator Plummer, R-Vandalia) provides that upon request by a unit of local government, the Department of Transportation shall make available any completed study or survey that concerns traffic or the environmental impact on road construction projects.

(Support)

The Forests, Wetlands, and Prairies Act

SB 2781 (Senator Ventura, D-Joliet/Representative Huynh, D-Chicago) creates the Forests, Wetlands, and Prairies Act. Provides that the Department of Natural Resources shall prepare and maintain a comprehensive Forests, Wetlands, and Prairies Grant plan for the preservation and enhancement of forests, prairies, and wetlands in Illinois. Provides that the Department of Natural Resources, pursuant to the comprehensive plan and subject to appropriation, shall

establish and administer a Forests, Wetlands, and Prairies Grant Program to restore degraded forest lands and native prairies, and to promote the growth of native vegetation that remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and help to mitigate the impact of climate change. Provides that units of local government are eligible to submit a grant proposal in a format and at a time prescribed by the Department of Natural Resources. Provides that grants may be used by units of local government to fund: (1) local projects restoring or expanding forests, wetlands, prairies, or other natural landscapes demonstrated to absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere; (2) education and marketing regarding local projects or steps community members may take to promote the growth of native vegetation that removes carbon dioxide from the atmosphere; and (3) any other purpose approved by the Department of Natural Resources that advances the State goal that there be no overall net loss of the State's existing forest, prairie, or wetland acres or their functional value due to State-supported activities. Amends the Department of Natural Resources Act and the State Finance Act to make conforming changes. Provides that the Department of Natural Resources may use an amount not to exceed 2% of the moneys appropriated for the Healthy Forests, Wetlands, and Prairies Grant Program for administrative costs. Provides that the Department shall use an amount of not less than 75% of the moneys appropriated for the Program to disburse as grants. Provides that moneys in the Healthy Forests, Wetlands, and Prairies Grant Fund shall be used by the Department for advancing the purposes of the Act. Makes technical and other changes. **(Support)**

Employee Pay Stub Mandate with Civil Penalties

SB 3208 (Senator Villa, D-West Chicago/Representative Avelar, D-Romeoville) provides that an employer shall provide employees and former employees with a copy of their pay stubs upon request. Provides that an employer is not required to grant a former employee's request for a copy of pay stubs more than twice in a 12-month period or more than one year after the date of separation. Provides that an employer who furnishes electronic pay stubs in a manner that a former employee cannot access for at least a full year after separation shall, upon an employee's separation from employment, offer to provide the outgoing employee with a record of all the outgoing employee's pay stubs from the year preceding the date of separation. A request made for a copy of a pay stub shall be made to a person responsible for maintaining the employer's payroll, including the employer's human resources department or payroll department, the employee's supervisor or department manager or an individual designated in the employer's written policy. The bill includes a civil penalty of up to \$500 per violation. **(Oppose)**

County Health Department Distribution of Fentanyl Test Strips

SB 3350 (Senator Ellman, D-Naperville/Representative McCombie, R-Savanna) provides that the Department of Human Services may establish or authorize a program for dispensing and distributing fentanyl test strips. Also provides that a county health department may distribute fentanyl test strips for no fee. **(Support)**

Counties Problem Solving Court

SB 3405 (Senator Rose, R-Champaign/Representative Miller, R-Charleston) provides that, notwithstanding any other provisions of law, a county may use funds designated by law or ordinance for transportation purposes to fund rides for persons to attend problem-solving courts. Allows a county to enter into an intergovernmental agreement with another unit of local government for the purposes of the provisions. Defines "problem-solving court" as a court program regulated under the Drug Court Treatment Act, the Juvenile Drug Court Treatment Act, the Mental Health Court Treatment Act, or the Veterans and Servicemembers Court Treatment Act. **(Support)**

Property Tax System Evaluation

SB 3455 (Senator Martwick, D-Chicago/Representative Canty, D-Arlington Heights) provides that the Department of Revenue, in consultation with the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, shall conduct a study to evaluate the property tax system in the State. **(No Position)**

Climate Bank Loan Financing Act

SB 3597 (Senator Ventura, D-Joliet/Representative Gabel, D-Evanston) creates the Climate Bank Loan Financing Act. Allows a governmental unit (i) to own, construct, equip, manage, control, erect, improve, extend, maintain, and operate new or existing clean energy infrastructure projects, to purchase real estate and any property rights to be used for clean energy infrastructure projects, and to charge for the use of clean energy infrastructure, (ii) to borrow money and to access a loan from the Illinois Finance Authority to finance the acquisition, construction, or improvement of new or existing clean energy infrastructure under the Illinois Climate Bank bond loan programs of the Illinois Finance Authority, and (iii) to issue from time to time general obligation bonds, including alternate bonds and limited bonds, and revenue bonds pursuant to applicable law for the purpose of evidencing its obligation to repay its loans from the Illinois Finance Authority. **(Support)**

2024 NACo Annual Conference



The 2024 National Association of Counties (NACo) Annual Conference will be held from July 12 to 15 in Hillsborough County, Florida.

The NACo Annual Conference is the premier gathering of elected and appointed officials from the nation's 3,069 counties, parishes and boroughs. Conference content includes discussion of federal policies impacting counties, workshops lifting up county best practices, engaging general sessions, mobile tours across our host county and more. NACo members also have the opportunity to influence the association's direction and future during the Annual Business Meeting on the final day of the conference.

ISACo staff as well as member county officials will be in attendance at the Annual Conference. During this time, ISACo members come together as an Association to choose who they will support for second Vice President of NACo.

This years' candidates include:

- ✔ Joe Briggs, Cascade County, Mon. commissioner
- ✔ George Dunlap, Mecklenburg County, N.C. commission chair
- ✔ Bill Truex, Charlotte County, Fla. commissioner

Visit member.naco.org and click "events" to register for the conference today.



Karen Yarbrough, Cook County Clerk

In Memoriam

Karen Yarbrough, Cook County Clerk, passed away on April 7, 2024, at the age of 73. Yarbrough was elected as Clerk in 2018 and previously served as a state representative and Cook County's Recorder of Deeds. Yarbrough was the first Black woman to serve as Cook County Clerk.

MICHAEL FRERICHS, ILLINOIS STATE TREASURER INVITES YOU TO

The Local Officials Appreciation Picnic

Director's Lawn at the Illinois State Fair in Springfield
12 p.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, August 17, 2024



Michael W. Frerichs
ILLINOIS STATE TREASURER

RSVP

Erin Slone
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217-685-2584

New

Corporate Sponsors

The Illinois State Association of Counties (ISACo) is pleased to announce its latest corporate partnerships with the **Illinois State Treasurer's Office-Illinois Funds** and **Constellation Telecom**.

Illinois State Treasurer's Office

The **Illinois State Treasurer's Office** provides treasury management services for local governments to conduct business safely and efficiently. The **Illinois Funds** is a \$19 billion local government investment pool servicing 1,500 local and state participants, **ePAY** offers competitively priced payment processing options. The office also offers free cybersecurity training and encryption technologies to our participants.

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2024 County Lobby Day

"Throughout history, 'Unity makes strength' has echoed as a timeless motto, embraced by states and entities alike. The inaugural collaboration between the Illinois State Association of Counties and the United Counties Council of Illinois for County Lobby Day exemplifies the power of solidarity among Illinois counties. By joining together for this first time, counties were able to showcase to Springfield the formidable capabilities of united counties."

Matthew Prochaska *Illinois State Association of Counties President*





"I have been learning about how county governments are affected by state policies. It helps when we have ISACo County Lobby Day events to help us meet our Illinois State Senators and Representatives in Springfield to share information about state and county priorities."
Lucy Evans, DuPage County Board Member



"County Lobby Day was a tremendous opportunity to interact with other county officials and legislators with the goal of solving problems for the people that elected us to serve them. It was well worth my time and I encourage county officials to participate in events like this."
David Zimmerman Tazewell County Board Chairman





Join an ISACo

Policy Committee Today!

ISACo Policy Committees have been hard at work in 2024. Meetings are held virtually and committees meet four times per year unless committee members desire to meet more frequently. ISACo created the following committees for members to serve on to discuss issues and shape state policy:

Committees

- ✔ Agriculture and Rural Affairs Policy Committee
- ✔ Community, Economic & Workforce Development Policy Committee
- ✔ Environment, Energy and Land Use Policy Committee
- ✔ Public Health Policy Committee
- ✔ Justice and Public Safety Policy Committee
- ✔ Transportation Policy Committee
- ✔ Arts and Culture Policy Committee

The following quotes from committee chairs highlight the importance and value of the policy committees.

“As chair of the ISACO Justice & Public Safety Committee, the meetings offer county to county discussions on topics in need of attention or change, said Gustin.”

“The committee allows a free flow of information providing guidance to ISACO on important county issues to the state. ISACO is blessed to have such a hardworking and diligent team to implement the work to be done. The work that help keep our counties safe and desirable places to live.”

-Patty Gustin, Chair of the Justice and Public Safety Committee

“The Community, Economic, and Workforce Development Policy Committee has met twice, Reneau said.” “I am encouraged by the engagement of each member and their enthusiasm to exchange ideas and collaborate towards common goals. We are eager to identify policies that will benefit our communities and the people we serve.”

-Rob Reneau, Chair of the Economic and Workforce Development Committee

Please email Legislative Advocacy and Research Manager **Nekya Hall** at nhall@isacoil.org to learn more about joining a policy committee. It's not too late to sign up!

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Become an ISACo Corporate Partner!

ISACo's Corporate Partner Program was established to provide a forum for companies and organizations to build relationships with county officials while supporting the important work of ISACo.

The program offers five options for corporations and organizations to become associate members of ISACo while receiving benefits for this status.

Please contact the ISACo Member Services and Communications Manager, Tiffani Homer at thomer@isacoil.org to learn more.

www.isacoil.org

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JULY 2024

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