



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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On These and Other Legislative Issues Important To Working People

The Senate was the only chamber to return to Springfield this week for the first scheduled week of Veto Session. Next week, both the House and Senate will return for the second, and final, scheduled week. Both chambers will convene at noon on Wednesday, November 19th.

ACTION IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Senate Confirms Labor Leaders to Key Positions in Illinois

The Senate reviewed recommendations for appointments to key positions in the State from Governor Blagojevich and Attorney General Madigan. Among the appointees were many labor leaders in Illinois. The following individuals were confirmed by the Senate this week:

- **Albert Washington (SEIU)** was confirmed to be a member of the Illinois Labor Relations Board beginning November 5, 2008 and ending January 28, 2013.
- **Gary Blankenship (UA)** was confirmed to be a member of the Illinois Pollution Control Board beginning December 1, 2008 and ending July 1, 2011.
- **David Penn (LIUNA)** was confirmed to be a member of the Health Facilities Planning Board beginning June 3, 2008 and ending July 1, 2010.
- **Mark Guethle (IUPAT)** was confirmed to be a member of the Department of Labor Advisory Board beginning July 21, 2008 and ending January 18, 2010.
- **Tom Villanova (President, Chicago & Cook County Building Trades; IBEW)** was confirmed to be a member of the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority beginning September 9, 2008 and ending June 1, 2012.
- **Roger Poole (IAM)** was confirmed to be a member of the Southwestern Illinois Development Authority beginning September 19, 2008 and ending January 17, 2011.
- **Ron Ettinger (IFT)** was confirmed to be a member of the Educational Labor Relations Board beginning June 2, 2008 and ending July 1, 2014.
- **Lanita Koster (IFT)** was confirmed to be a member of the Illinois State Board of Education beginning May 12, 2008 and ending January 12, 2011.
- **John Penn (LIUNA)** was confirmed to be a member of the Department of Labor Advisory Board beginning May 12, 2008 and ending January 18, 2010.
- **Teresa Payne (Illinois AFL-CIO)** was confirmed to be a member of the Workforce Investment Board beginning September 9, 2008 and ending July 1, 2011.

Peoria Area Sees Victory with Passage of Tax Referendum Bill

The Senate concurred with changes made by the House earlier this year to Senate Bill 1290. Senator Dave Koehler (D – Peoria) sponsored the legislation to allow county boards to impose a special retail tax to fund public facility construction, but voters must pass the increase by referendum. Specifically in Peoria, they would use the additional revenue to fund a Peoria River Front Museum, which will be used to educate visitors on the history of Peoria, the State of Illinois, and our country. The facility will include hands-on learning exhibits and theatres to view visual presentations. Senate Bill 1290 now goes to the Governor for his consideration.

NATIONAL NEWS

Obama Resigns Senate Seat

President-elect Barack Obama has officially resigned his U.S. Senate seat.

In a statement, Senator Obama said, "In a state that represents the crossroads of a nation, I have met so many men and women who've taken different journeys but have common hopes for their children's futures. It is these Illinois families and their stories that will stay with me as I leave the United States Senate and begin the hard task of fulfilling the simple hopes and common dreams of all Americans as our nation's next president."

Gov. Blagojevich is now tasked with selecting the person to fill the remaining two years of Senator Obama's term. The Governor said during a recent press conference that he will set up a committee of senior staff members to help with the selection process. He said he hopes to name Obama's replacement by New Year's Day.