

INFRASTRUCTURE COUNCIL

Newsletter

Andrew Cunningham | Executive Director, Infrastructure Council | 217-520-2345



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The Infrastructure Council is an initiative of the Illinois Chamber that brings together Chamber members with a focus on increasing infrastructure investments in a strategic and thoughtful way to boost the overall business climate in Illinois. Our focus is on the public and private systems that are essential to Illinois businesses.

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Session Update

The Illinois General Assembly was back in Springfield this week for the second and final week of veto session . The House and Senate returned to Springfield on Tuesday and concluded business by early in the evening on Thursday.

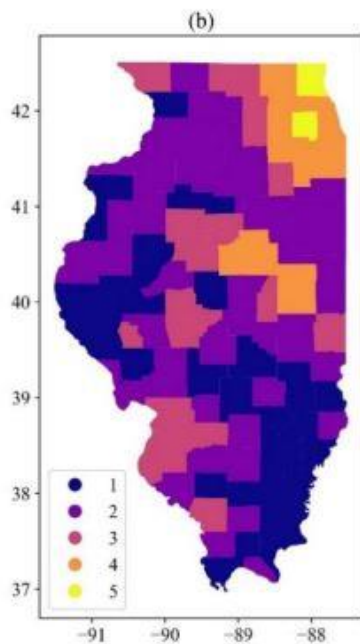
Unlike the first week of veto, there was significant action of note on the floor and in committees over the past few days.

The most significant action of this week was a compromise on Unemployment Insurance trust fund debt between business and labor through the agreed bill process. The process, which has been around for nearly four decades, requires business and labor leaders to sit down with legislators in all four caucuses to work out a deal. Following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the trust fund was facing a \$4.5 billion deficit, a loss of more than \$6 billion since the pandemic forced layoffs. This negotiated solution will save employers \$913 million over the next five years.

For more information on this compromise, the position paper of the joint employers can be found [HERE](#).

After conclusion of business on Thursday afternoon, the Senate released its [session calendar](#) for 2023. Lawmakers will return January 4th for the beginning of lame duck session. The 103rd General Assembly will be inaugurated on January 11th.

Electric Vehicle Steering Committee Holds Final Meeting



On Wednesday, I attended the final electric vehicle steering committee meeting. The steering committee is a part of the IDOT-funded research project: EV Infrastructure Plan for Illinois. The work for this project was facilitated by Chamber member, the University of Illinois and the Kontou Research Group.

The presentation was informative and committee members asked many questions that may turn into future areas of research.

Past steering committee insight and feedback was already incorporated into the final report. The committee membership was wide-ranging and made up of representatives from advocacy groups, the public sector, charging providers and academia.

As seen in the map provided in this section, Illinois is divided into five color-coded clusters based on levels of EV adoption. Cluster 5, noted with the color yellow, has the highest levels of adoption and is comprised of Lake and DuPage County. Cluster 1, noted with a dark blue color, has the lowest levels of adoption and is comprised of counties across the State. A high concentration of cluster 1 counties can be seen in Southeast Illinois.

Here are some of the highlights from the final committee meeting:

- There is a clear difference in regional demand for electric vehicles with the State being divided into five "clusters" based on demand levels.
- As may be expected, urbanized and denser regions are the early adopters of EVs while more rural regions lag behind.
- Illinois currently has 1,006 charging stations and 2,569 EVSE ports

Research Conclusions:

- Most chargers need to be deployed in first 10-15 years of the transition to allow benefits to accrue for electric vehicle drivers
- Census tracts, interstates and major highways that should be prioritized during the Illinois' statewide deployment of charging infrastructure were identified. I-90, I-80, I-55, and I-57 scored as highly suitable for charging stations.
- Considering system efficiency, low-income and multi-unit housing residents are most likely to fail to complete their trips. Equitable charging deployment is seen as solution to mitigate this issue.

Final Thoughts: There are clear disparities in levels of EV adoption across the State. A theme of the meeting was what needs to take place for further statewide growth of EVs. The research suggested that EV charging infrastructure investment and deployment could be the major factor in leading to adoption growth in lagging clusters.

View the research brief [here](#).

Illinois Chamber Signs Letter Urging Congressional Action to Avert Rail Strike

Earlier this week, the Illinois Chamber signed onto a national coalition letter urging Congressional action to avoid a national rail strike while warning of its potentially devastating effects on the US economy.

In part, the letter said the following.

We write in concern of the potential for a devastating nationwide rail strike in early December and call on Congress to ensure this worst-case scenario is averted.

A rail stoppage would cost at least \$2 billion per day in lost economic output across the U.S., according to inflation-adjusted damage estimates from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). Rail service is critical to all industry—from manufacturing and trade to construction and agriculture. Trains serve business at every stage, from moving the raw materials necessary for production to the finished products ready for consumers or export. It would take almost 470,000 additional long-haul trucks every day to carry the displaced rail freight resulting from a stoppage, a feat that’s not even possible today given driver shortages.

A rail network shutdown of any duration would also lead to plant shutdowns and job losses. An FRA model showed that a two-week, nationwide strike in 1992 would have caused some 570,000 layoffs in rail-served industries—a number that would be higher today given our more robust supply chains.

Take the implications for international trade, to which about half of all rail intermodal volumes are connected. The American Association of Port Authorities said, “a network shutdown of any length would have far-reaching effects.” The Retail Industry Leaders Association similarly wrote that a network disruption would be “devastating” to the businesses that rely on rail.

Read the full letter [here](#).

On Wednesday, the US House of Representatives passed [H.J. Res.100](#) by a vote of 290-137. The resolution was passed yesterday in the Senate by a vote of 80-15-0. This joint resolution requires the parties to the disputes between certain railroads and labor organizations to accept the most recent tentative agreements, side letters, and local carrier agreements entered into by the

parties that have not been ratified before the date of enactment of this joint resolution.

The US Chamber strongly urged for the passage of this resolution to avert the rail strike. This resolution is expected to be signed by President Biden.

Legislative Update

[HB 1587](#), **Board/Comission Changes** passed the Senate by a vote of 39-18-0. Among other things, this bill amends the Blue-Ribbon Commission on Transportation Infrastructure and Policy Act. Provides that: (i) members shall be appointed to the Commission by December 31, 2022 (rather than May 31, 2022); (ii) the Commission shall hold its first meeting by January 15, 2023 (rather than within 2 months from the Act's effective date); (iii) the Commission shall report a summary of its activities and produce a final report to the General Assembly by September 15, 2023 (rather than January 31, 2023); and (iv) the Commission is dissolved, and the Act is repealed, on September 30, 2023 (rather than February 1, 2023). Amends the Renewable Energy Component Recycling Task Force Act. Deletes provisions requiring the legislative leaders' appointees to the Renewable Energy Component Recycling Task Force to be representatives of solid waste disposal and renewable energy organizations. Amends the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority Act. Adds a gubernatorial appointee and a mayoral appointee to the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Board. Amends the Alexander-Cairo Port District Act. Adds 2 gubernatorial appointees to the Board of the District and requires one to have wetlands mitigation experience and one to have economic development experience. Requires 5 members of the Board (rather than 4 members of the Board) for a quorum for the transaction of business. Amends the Illinois Gambling Act. Removes a provision requiring the appointment to the Illinois Gaming Board of a board member who is a certified public accountant. Amends the Environmental Justice Act. Specifies that members appointed on or after the effective date are to serve 4-year terms (rather than 2-year terms.

[HB 2406](#), **Sunset Date Extensions** passed out of the Senate by a vote of 96-0-4 and passed the House on Concurrence by a vote of 96-04. This bill, as amended, extends various sunset dates. Including an amendment to the Illinois Power Agency Act, which provides that language that states that the

authorization to impose any new taxes or fees specifically related to generation of electricity by, the capacity to generate electricity by, or the emissions into the atmosphere by electric generating facilities is an exclusive power and function of the State is repealed on January 1, 2024 (instead of January 1, 2023). This bill also extends the Transportation Network Providers Act repeal date to September 1, 2023. This is the enabling act for rideshare companies like Uber and Lyft. The extension of this repeal date to September means this issue will be continued in the Spring.

[HB 5049](#), **SOS Rulemaking/Age-related Study** passed the Senate by a vote of 52-1-0 and the House by a vote of 80-14-1.. This bill changes the repeal date of provisions concerning emergency rulemaking by the Secretary of State from January 1, 2023 to October 1, 2023. Requires the Secretary of State to conduct a study, by October 1, 2023, on age-related changes in vision, physical functioning, and the ability to reason and remember, as well as any other diseases and medications that might affect safe driving abilities. Provides that upon completion of the study, if the study shows that there is no immediate risk to public safety, the Secretary of State may adopt administrative rules to raise or lower the age requirement for actual demonstrations, provided that the required age shall be no lower than the minimum age required under a specified provision of the Illinois Vehicle Code concerning the re-examination of certain driver's license applicants.

[SB 1595](#), **TIF Extensions** passed the House by a vote of 93-11-5 and passed the Senate on concurrence by a vote of 52-0-0. This bill amends the Tax Increment Allocation Redevelopment Act of the Illinois Municipal Code. Extends the estimated dates of completion of redevelopment projects and the retirement of obligations issued to finance redevelopment project costs for various ordinances adopted by the City of Chicago, the Village of Elkhart, the City of Robinson, the Village of Valmeyer, and the City of McHenry. Creates tax increment allocation financing extensions to the 47th year (currently, the 35th year) for ordinances adopted by the City of Pontiac if the City of Pontiac adopts a specified ordinance and provides notice to the taxing bodies that would otherwise constitute the joint review board of each redevelopment project area.

Rulemaking

In the November 28th edition of the [Illinois Register](#), Issuance of Licenses (92 IAC 1030; 46 Ill Reg 15522) was moved to second notice, commencing the JCAR review period. This rulemaking will be considered at the December 13th meeting in Chicago. This is the proposed rulemaking removing the requirement that Illinois Commercial Driver's License (CDL) applicants who hold valid out of State CDLs retake their CDL written and pre-trip/skills/road exams.

In October, the Illinois Chamber wrote a public comment in support of this rulemaking.

Illinois Soybean Association: Bridge Bundling Update

The Illinois Soybean Association invites you to explore bridge bundling, a concept that allows a number of bridges to be repaired quicker and at less expense.

Within the 2023-2028 MYP IDOT included fourteen bundles encompassing fifty-six structures. This past week IDOT announced the award of the first bridge bundling engineering contract. The contract is for Phase I and II engineering for the structures. The contract consists of one six bridge bundle and one four bridge bundle. The engineering for these two bundles is expected to be complete by 2026 and 2027.

Fill out this [form](#) from the ISA to learn more and to access many resources on the topic of bridge bundling.

Articles of Interest

[Illinois plans to pay off rest of pandemic unemployment debt](#)

[U.S. Threatens to Start Trade Fight With Mexico Over GMO Corn Ban](#)

Senate Votes 80-15 to Pass Bill Blocking Nationwide Rail Strike

[Junk Bonds Rally as Investors Speculate Inflation Has Peaked](#)

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