**Illinois Updates – July 8, 2022**

Special Session Dates Uncertain

In a joint statement issued Tuesday, Governor JB Pritzker, Senate President Don Harmon and House Speaker Chris Welch said they would not convene in special session this week to address legislation related to the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling to overturn Roe vs. Wade. While the Governor and Democratic leaders intend to act on related legislation, they will take the rest of the summer to determine what that will entail. Pritzker has said he would like to change state law to allow additional healthcare providers such as advanced practice nurses to be able to perform abortions. The Governor also said he would not support efforts to fund travel for out of state patients to Illinois, a request of Planned Parenthood. The three leaders said a special session could possibly be scheduled in September.

Action and Reaction to Highland Park

In the wake of Monday’s mass shooting in Highland Park, the Governor and Democratic leaders have said that any future special session could include consideration of changes to the state’s gun laws in addition to abortion. Legislators and the public have questioned how the shooter was able to legally obtain a weapon given his record of having been investigated by police over previous threats of self-harm and violence. Measures that could be under consideration are a ban on assault weapons, mandating law enforcement to retain “clear and present danger” records for longer periods and lowering the threshold of proof to file a petition for a Firearms Restraining Order under the state’s current “red flag” law.

Any legislation passed with an immediate effective date after May 31st would require a 3/5ths majority for passage, making it more difficult to build consensus on such a controversial subject. Additionally, lawmakers representing areas of Chicago with high crime rates have voiced concerns that gun violence in their communities is not given the same emphasis as the Highland Park shooting.

Republican gubernatorial candidate Darren Bailey has come under fire for his response to the tragedy. In a Facebook live post immediately following the shooting, Bailey expressed sympathy for the victims and law enforcement but quickly urged listeners to “move on” and celebrate the holiday. Reaction from the media and his political opponents was immediate, decrying his remarks as tone deaf and insensitive. The candidate has since offered an apology and in turn has blamed Governor Pritzker for not using his power to implement the state’s existing red flag law.

Governor Issues Modified Executive Order on Jail Transfers

Governor JB Pritzker issued a modified executive order this week to continue to suspend transfers of mentally ill inmates to psychiatric facilities. The transfers were halted at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic to prevent spread of the disease, but the administration has recently faced legal challenges from sheriffs who want to resume the transfers to the Illinois Department of Human Services. Sangamon County Sheriff Jack Campbell filed suit against the Department last month, and a circuit judge made an initial ruling in favor of the county. A status hearing in that case has been set for August 1, 2022, and the current executive order will expire on July 24, 2022.

State Ends Fiscal Year on High Note

The Illinois Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability (COGFA) released numbers this week that showed the state experiencing its highest revenue balance in history. As fiscal year 2022 ended on June 30, state revenues grew by $5.5 billion dollars and exceeded $50 billion overall. In addition, the state currently has a zero-day accounts payable cycle, meaning that there are no unpaid bills to state vendors. COGFA and the Governor’s Office of Management and Budget both acknowledge that the state’s economic recovery has been fueled in part by direct and indirect effects of federal stimulus funds, but both the Governor and lawmakers claim they have anticipated the loss of federal COVID-19 stimulus in creating the FY 2023 budget.

Dates to Remember

* June 28, 2022 – Illinois General Primary Election
* November 8, 2022 – Illinois General Election
* November 15-17, November 29-December 1, 2022 – Veto Session