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**Illinois Updates – October 9, 2020**

Special Committee on Hold

The chair of the special investigative committee formed to consider disciplinary measures against House Speaker Michael J. Madigan announced this week that the committee will not meet again until after the November 3 general election. The focus of the committee is to examine Madigan’s role in an ongoing bribery investigation of electric utility Commonwealth Edison. Committee Chair Rep. Chris Welch (D-Westchester) said that the committee was being used as a means of political theater ahead of the election and would reconvene on November 5, 2020. Welch also indicated that he was requesting a number of records from ComEd related to their dealings with multiple legislators as part of the special investigation.

Republican members of the committee decried the move, claiming that Welch was stalling the committee’s work on behalf of Speaker Madigan. While the complaint filed in the ComEd bribery investigation names the House Speaker as Public Official A, Speaker Madigan has not been indicted or charged at this time.

Pritzker Talks Budget Cuts

Governor JB Pritzker said during a virtual press conference this week that grant programs and personnel cuts are among spending reductions under consideration by the administration. In September Pritzker asked state agencies under this control to outline spending reductions of 5 percent for the current FY 2021 and reductions of 10 percent for the upcoming fiscal year. The budget enacted by the General Assembly in May was predicated on additional federal stimulus which has not materialized. Agency reductions were to be submitted by the Governor’s Office of Management and Budget by last Friday, October 2. The Governor has not said when any spending cuts would take effect.

COVID-19 Updates

Region 4 comprised of the St. Louis Metro East region has finally met the threshold for reduced restrictions under the state’s Restore Illinois Plan. This means the region has had a positivity rate of less than 6.5 percent for a rolling average of three days. Moving to Phase 4 will allow bars and restaurants to serve customers inside at a reduced capacity. The restrictions were put in place in mid-August and are lifted effective October 9, 2020. Region 4 includes Bond, Clinton, Madison, Monroe, Randolph, St. Clair and Washington counties.

Meanwhile, Regions 1 and 6 are pushing back on recently imposed mitigation efforts. Lawmakers and elected officials in Region 1 have asked the Governor to waive restrictions for bars and restaurants despite a positivity rate of 8 percent or higher over a period of eleven days. Region 1 includes Winnebago, Boone, Ogle, Stephenson, DeKalb, Lee, Jo Daviess, Carroll and Whiteside counties.

In Region 6, Champaign County officials are making a similar request, asking for a carve out from the rest of the region. Region 6 has seen a recent upswing in cases of Covid-19 and may be placed under additional restrictions. As the home of the University of Illinois, Champaign county has benefited from the university’s robust testing system and has a lower positivity rate than neighboring counties.

IPI Sues Over Graduated Income Tax

The Illinois Policy Institute filed suit in Cook County this week over the wording of the ballot question for the proposed graduated income tax amendment. Naming the Illinois State Board of Elections and the Illinois Secretary of State in the suit, IPI and individual petitioners claim that the wording of the ballot question is misleading. The wording used was established by the underlying legislation passed by the General Assembly, which was approved without Republican votes. IPI believes that ISBE and SOS should send a corrective notice to voters that would use references to “different” rates of taxation as opposed to using the terms “higher” or “lower” rates which they claim could influence voters on the question. The plaintiffs’ motion to impose a temporary restraining order in relation to the lawsuit was denied today.

New Executive Orders

Governor JB Pritzker has issued additional executive orders in the past week related to the coronavirus pandemic. The orders are summarized as follows:

EO 2020-56 - REGION 1 MITIGATIONS — Region 1 has reported three consecutive days of a test positivity rate of 8 percent or higher. In response, public health restrictions and mitigations are instituted for Region 1, comprised of Boone, Carroll, DeKalb, Jo Daviess, Lee, Ogle, Stephenson, Whiteside and Winnebago counties, for restaurants and bars, meetings and social events, gaming and casinos and for all workplaces, effective October 3, 2020. This Executive Order supplements the Community Revitalization Order, Executive Order 43.

EO 2020-57 - CANNABIS IDENTIFICATION CARDS — Suspends the requirement that a medical or adult use cannabis cultivation center agent must have a completed background check when applying for an agent identification card. Also suspends the requirement that the Department must approve or deny an application for a medical or adult use cannabis cultivation center agent identification card within a certain amount of days.

**Illinois COVID-19 Resources**

* State of Illinois: <https://coronavirus.illinois.gov>
* Illinois House Republican Caucus: <https://ilcovid19info.com>
* Chicago residents can access information about the city’s response to the outbreak by texting “covid19” to 78015, or visiting the city’s dedicated webpage at <https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/sites/covid-19/home.html>
* A list of public and private testing sites can be found on the IDPH website at <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/testing>.

**Dates to Remember**

* November 3, 2020 – General Election
* November 17, 18, 19 – First week of Veto Session
* December 1, 2, 3 – Second week of Veto Session