**Illinois Updates – November 5, 2021**

Arroyo Changes Plea

Former state representative Luis Arroyo has changed his plea in the bribery case brought against him by the federal government to guilty. Arroyo was charged in 2019 with attempting to bribe a fellow legislator, later identified as former state senator Terry Link, for favorable consideration of gambling legislation. At the time of the bribery scheme, Link was cooperating with federal authorities to gain favorable treatment in relation to his own tax evasion case. The spouse of former state representative Toni Berrios has been charged with bribery in the same case but has pleaded not guilty. Arroyo will appear for sentencing on February 18, 2022 and may receive a maximum penalty of three years in prison and $250,000 in fines.

Leaders to Join Pritzker on Trade Mission

House Speaker Chris Welch and Senate President Don Harmon will join Governor JB Pritzker for the first half of the administration’s trade mission to the United Kingdom next week. Welch and Harmon will travel with Pritzker to London to brief business leaders and encourage foreign investment in the state. Following the London visit, Pritzker and the Illinois delegation will attend the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties in Glasgow. Pritzker’s message to potential investors is that the state’s leadership on climate change, its location as a transportation hub, a ready work force and newly enacted tax incentives for the electric vehicle industry make Illinois a logical site for business development.

Rosenthal to Challenge McClure

Political news source the Illinoize reported this week that former state representative and Director of Natural Resources Wayne Rosenthal announced he will run against State Senator Steve McClure (R-Jacksonville) in the 2022 Republican primary. Rosenthal served in the Illinois House from 2011 to 2015, when he was appointed the director of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources by Governor Bruce Rauner.

McClure has represented the 50th Senate District in central Illinois since 2019. He is a former Sangamon County Assistant State’s Attorney. Under the newly drafted legislative map, the candidates will run to represent the future 54th Senate district.

Pritzker Issues EO on Gun Violence

Governor Pritzker issued an executive order Monday to address gun violence throughout the state, classifying it as a public health crisis. In issuing the order, the governor outlined plans to increase state spending on gun violence prevention, including some funds from the federal American Recovery Plan. Citing the recently enacted Reimagine Public Safety Act, Pritzker said the state’s current fiscal year plan included $50 million to the Office of Firearm Violence Prevention. The office will have the ability to make grants to community organizations and programs seeking to provide solutions to gun-related violence and crimes.

House Republican Departures Announced

State Representative Mark Batinick (R-Plainfield) has announced he will not run for reelection in 2022. Batinick has served in the House since 2015, and was the House floor leader, responsible for leading floor debate and questioning of sponsors on behalf of the House Republican caucus. The Representative indicated he will fill out his entire term.

His colleague, Representative Mike Murphy (R-Springfield) will likely be leaving early. Murphy was named head of the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce last week and is expected to resign prior to the General Assembly reconvening in January. Murphy was drawn into the same legislative district as Assistant Republican Leader Avery Bourne (R-Litchfield). Murphy had previously stated he would not run against Bourne in a primary for the new district.

Dates to Remember

* January 4, 2022 – First day of Regular Session
* January 14, 2022 – LRB Deadline
* January 28, 2022 – House Bill Introduction Deadline
* February 2, 2022 – Governor’s State of the State/Budget Address
* February 18, 2022 – House Committee Deadline
* March 4, 2022 – House Third Reading Deadline
* March 25, 2022 – Senate Bills in the House – Committee Deadline
* April 1, 2022 – Senate Bills in the House – Third Reading Deadline
* April 8, 2022 – Scheduled Adjournment