

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



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Looking Ahead: Veto Session and Spring 2021

Lawmakers and those who work with the legislature have begun to look ahead to the fall veto session and the upcoming 102nd General Assembly. The fall veto session is scheduled for November 17-19, and December 1-3, 2020. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and a truncated spring 2020 session, there are no vetoes to deliberate but legislators will use the session as an opportunity to act on a number of emerging issues.

In response to the death of George Floyd and national protests related to it, the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus will introduce a package of reform legislation intended to address systemic racism during the veto session. The package is based on four pillars, including: criminal justice reform, violence reduction and police accountability; education and workforce development; economic access, equity and opportunity; and healthcare and human services.

Republican lawmakers want to see action on ethics reform during the veto session. The Senate Republican caucus introduced a package of bills in response to multiple federal investigations involving Democratic legislators. In September, the Joint Commission on Ethics and Lobbying Reform shared a summary of proposals it had received with members of the House in order to facilitate discussion when legislators return to Springfield.

For the 102nd General Assembly, IAFPD will reintroduce bills that were filed during 2020 as well as at least one additional measure. Last spring, we filed language to ensure that fire protection

districts are represented on the board of trustees for the consolidated Illinois Firefighters Pension Investment Fund. That legislation, House Bill 5096, would provide for a dedicated position for fire protection districts on the board similar to the AFFI and the Illinois Municipal League, and would require that at least one of the three employer positions on the board be held by a representative of a fire protection district.

We will also continue to seek changes in the Tax Increment Allocation Redevelopment Act that would require TIF redevelopment plans to include costs related to provision of fire service. IAFPD has filed this bill multiple times, but last spring saw a new focus on TIF reform by members of the General Assembly. The association was working to have our language included in a proposed TIF reform omnibus bill before the spring session was cut short and we will take up that effort again when session reconvenes next spring.

In addition to previously introduced bills, IAFPD will file legislation to amend the Public Funds Statement Publication Act (30 ILCS 15) to allow for publication to be made in a newspaper of general circulation in the district, as opposed to the current law which requires publication in a newspaper actually published in the district. This change will dovetail with the changes made in Public Act 101-40, which made a similar change with regard to publication of bid notices by fire protection districts. The association is also looking at filing a bill to require that

before any consolidation of fire protection districts or departments a response time study would have to be completed.

How and where session will be held remains in question. Perhaps more than any other institution, the legislative process is driven by personal face-to-face contact. Balancing the rights of citizens to petition their government with the personal safety of legislator and staff will be difficult. But like every other endeavor during the pandemic, those who work with the General Assembly are proceeding with plans for session and hoping for the best. ■