



## ALLIANCE LEGISLATIVE REPORT (95-70)

### BUDGET PASSED; LEGISLATURE ADJOURNS

The Illinois General Assembly Saturday approved a Fiscal Year 2009 State budget and adjourned for the summer as Democrat leaders vowed not to enter into another protracted summer budget battle. Though proponents of a statewide infrastructure bill battled until the bitter end of session pushing a capital bill funded by an expansion of gaming throughout the State, no such bills were approved and the issue is likely pushed off until November. Had the budget not been approved by Sunday, a 3/5 vote would have been necessary for passage and Republican legislators would have been given a seat at the negotiating table.

The appropriations bills now go to the Governor for consideration. Opponents of the new budget claim that it is not balanced and could be causing a huge new budget deficit. If Governor Blagojevich perceives that the budget is not balanced, a series of line item or reduction vetoes could be in order. The legislature will most likely take up any budget vetoes in the November Veto Session – after the General Election.

The Senate narrowly approved a bill supported by the Governor to issue \$16 billion in new Pension Obligation Bonds designed to restructure the State’s pension payments and to free up cash for the FY ’09 budget. The bill, **SB 788 (Harmon, D-Oak Park)**, was held in the House Executive Committee and was never called for a vote on the House floor. The Senate also passed an initiative of the Governor to “sweep” funds (\$530 million worth) from various dedicated State funds into the General Revenue Fund to help fund the new budget. **SB 790 (Schoenberg, D-Evanston)**, likewise, went nowhere in the House.

### EDUCATION BUDGET

For FY ’09, Elementary and Secondary Education will see an increase of approximately \$515 million over FY’ 08 budget levels. This includes \$148 million for school construction for the 24 school districts that have been waiting for over five years for their School Construction Grant funding.

**HB 5701 (Hannig, D-Litchfield)** will increase the school funding formula’s foundation level by \$225 per pupil and fully fund the mandated categorical grant programs. It funds transition aid with \$31 million, assuring that no school district will receive less State money in FY ’09 than it did in FY ’08. Early childhood education is increased by \$32.4 million, but the ADA Block Grant was held to the FY ’08 funding level. Other budget line items with increases are:

Gifted Education	\$2 million	Arts & Foreign Language	\$4 million
Free Breakfast/Lunch	\$5.3 million	Teachers & Admin. Mentoring	\$2 million
Grow Your Own Teachers	\$500,000	Bi-Lingual Assessments	\$12.6 million
Response to Intervention	\$2 million	Educator Misconduct Investigations	\$375,000

### BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION BILL

**SB 773 (Schoenberg)** implements the appropriations contained in HB 5701. It changes the language in the School Code to increase the per pupil foundation level by \$225, bringing the total amount to \$5,959 per pupil. It also continues the transitional aid provision and continues the poverty grant “hold harmless” provision. The bill will be sent to the Governor for consideration.

## CAPITAL PROGRAMS; GAMING EXPANSION

Though most every legislator supports the idea of a new capital programs bill, the issue again stalled in the legislature. The sticking point, again, was the revenue stream to pay for the program. The Senate approved a series of related bills: a capitol bill (**HB 6339**), a bonding bill (**HB 4723**), a gaming expansion bill (**HB 2651**), and a bill to privatize the Illinois State Lottery (**HB 1496**). None of the bills, however, was called for a vote on the House floor.

The Lottery sale was estimated to bring \$10 billion into State coffers for the infrastructure program. \$600 million per year would have been dedicated to the education fund in an effort to avoid any loss in revenue that schools currently receive from the Lottery. The gaming expansion bill would have established a Chicago land-based casino and more riverboats with 70% of the receipts allocated for State infrastructure and 30% of the receipts going to education. Those education funds would have been allocated to General State Aid, early childhood education, fast growth districts, and the ADA Block Grant.

For school construction, funds would have been made available for the School Construction Grant Program, pre-school construction, and school maintenance grants.

## OTHER BILL ACTION THIS WEEK

The following bills have been approved by both chambers of the legislature and will be sent to the Governor for consideration:

**HB 1141 (Jefferson, D-Rockford)** defines "hard-to-staff" school and provides that the incentives and bonuses are for teachers and administrators employed by school districts in schools so designated. It also makes changes regarding tuition for non-resident pupils in residential facilities (modifying SB 2042).

**HB 4252 (Brady, R-Bloomington)** provides that if an employee of a school district has made a report to DCFS under the Mandated Reporters Act involving the conduct of a current or former employee of the school district, and a request is made by another school district to provide information concerning the job performance or qualifications of the current or former employee because he or she is an applicant for employment, the superintendent of the school district to which the request is being made must disclose to the requesting school district the fact that a report had been made.

**HB 4536 (Flider, D-Mt. Zion)**, regarding the expiration date on the provisions in the pension code allowing retired teachers to return to teaching in subject shortage areas without impairing their retirement status or retirement annuity, moves this "sunset date" back to June 30, 2013.

**HB 5077 (Smith, D-Canton)** removes the \$10 million funding cap for the pilot project for lap top computers.

**SB 848 (Clayborne, D-E. St. Louis)** modifies debt limitations for Mascoutah CUSD 19.

**SB 2482 (Lightford, D-Maywood)** removes obsolete and duplicative language from the Illinois School Code. As further amended, the bill allows the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy to develop additional campuses throughout the State and that any additional campus does not need to

serve as a residential institution. The bill also requires school districts to promptly make a copy of the certified copy of the child's birth certificate for its records and return the original certified copy to the person providing it and provides that school districts, once they obtained a copy of a certified copy of a child's birth certificate, need not request another such copy for any other year in which the child is enrolled in that school.

**SB 2487 (Forby, D-Benton)** clarifies and corrects the newly created Article 11E for school district reorganizations.

**SB 2512 (Link, D-Vernon Hills)** requires school districts to provide a unit of instruction on Internet safety. The school board shall determine the scope and duration of this unit of instruction and can incorporate into the current courses of study regularly taught in the district's schools, as determined by the school board.

**SB 2685 (Delgado, D-Chicago)**, beginning with the 2009-2010 school year, requires teachers' institutes to include instruction on prevalent student chronic health conditions.

*\*The legislative report is written and edited by the lobbyists of the Illinois Association of School Boards to provide information to the members of the organizations that comprise the Statewide School Management Alliance.*

**Alliance Legislative Reports:**  
**Bill Text/Status: Illinois General Assembly**

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