



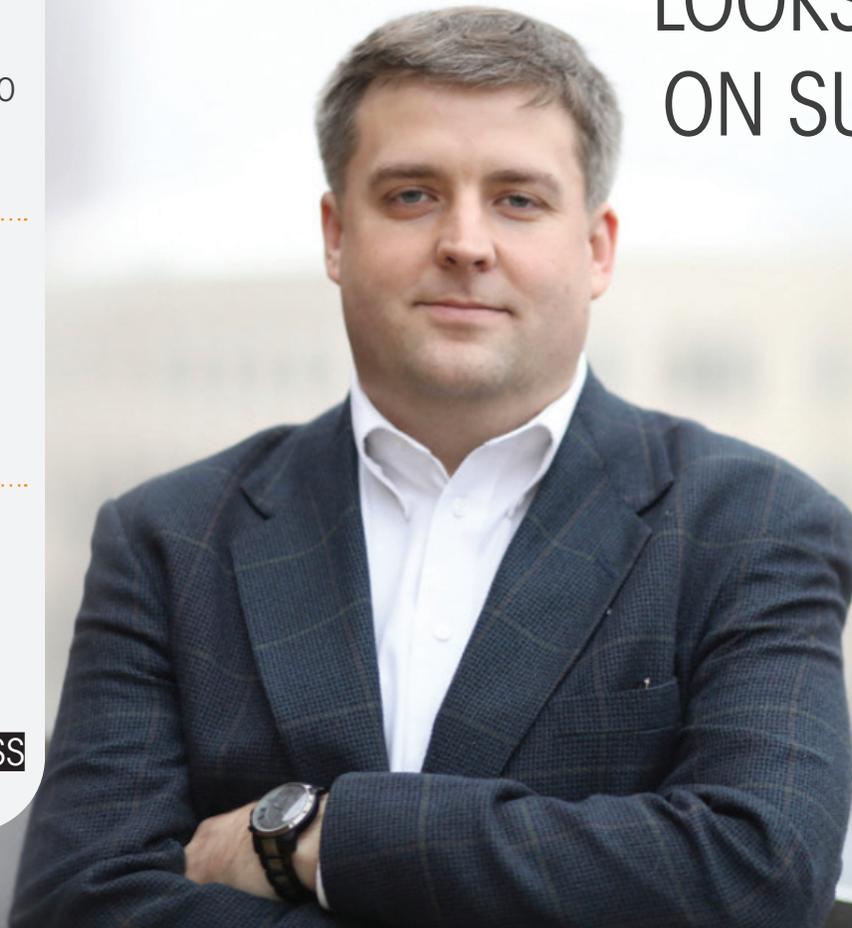
COUNTY

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2023

ISACO PRESIDENT MATT PROCHASKA

LOOKS TO BUILD
ON SUCCESSES



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Counties Count!



A Message from the President

By: Matt Prochaska, Kendall County Circuit Clerk

I greatly appreciate the trust my colleagues on the Board of Directors of the Illinois State Association of Counties (ISACo) have shown in electing me as their President. It is a great honor that comes with a huge responsibility to advocate and look out for the interests of 102 counties and more than 1,200 elected County Officials throughout the State.

Counties are one of America’s oldest forms of government, dating back to 1634 when the first county governments (shires) were established in Virginia. The organization and structure of today’s 3,069 county governments within the United States are chartered under state constitutions or laws tailored to fit the unique needs and characteristics of states and local areas.

No two counties are exactly the same in Illinois. Our counties are organized under one of two forms of government. These are the Commission (17 counties) and Township (85 counties) forms. The size of County Boards can vary by county. In some counties, the Board Chair is elected by their peers. In others the Chair is elected by voters at large. Cook County has a President of the Board of Commissioners who is elected at large. Will and Champaign Counties have County Executives who are elected at large. Cook County has home rule powers. The remaining 101 counties do not.

Each Illinois county delivers critical services to their residents despite the uniqueness in how counties are organized and structured.

Counties provide local communities with the tools to address local problems with local solutions. As a creation of the State,

and despite our varying organizational structures, all county governments are on the front lines in delivering essential public services and balancing numerous administrative responsibilities on behalf of residents. These services include transportation and infrastructure, community health, public safety and jails, courts, elections, vital records and assessments. Quite often, counties are the vehicle to enforce federal and state laws and regulations.

My focus over the next two years will be to work with the ISACo Board of Directors and the elected officials within our 102 counties to tell the county story to the Governor, the General Assembly, our Congressional delegation and the general public. It is paramount that we explain the important role counties play in building vibrant communities for all Illinois residents. Counties make crucial investments in our communities that help residents thrive, create pathways for economic growth and opportunity, foster individual achievement and extend a hand-up when needed. Above all we need to demonstrate that counties work, and that they work well.

We will achieve our goals by advocating in support of our *2023 County Action Plan* and *2023 County Platform*, by continuing to build and grow our relationships in the General Assembly and executive offices of the State, by working with our sister county organizations in Illinois and by continuing our longstanding partnership with the National Association of Counties (NACo).

These relationships and partnerships are key to our future success as we focus on our core message: *Counties Count!*

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A Message from the Executive Director

By: Joe McCoy, Executive Director

The 2023 spring legislative session is well underway and has returned to the pre-pandemic experience with in-person committee hearings and no COVID testing requirements for visiting with legislators and staff at the Statehouse. The only oddity is the multi-year construction project shutting down sections on the north end of the Statehouse, including the Senate gallery.

In total, 3,974 House Bills and 2,442 Senate Bills were filed by the February deadlines for a total of 6,416 bills.

After reviewing the bill summaries, ISACo tagged 849 bills for inclusion within our tracking system as of the final day to file new legislation. This is slightly more than 13% of all bills introduced and consists of bills that either affect or are of interest to counties. They include bills that are good for counties, bills that are problematic for counties, bills needing closer scrutiny and bills included “for your information.”

Based upon our 2023 *County Platform*, of these 849 ISACo tracked bills, we support 116 and oppose 100. We either have “no position” on the remaining bills, or they remain “under review.” Bills “under review” typically require further analysis before we are comfortable deciding what, if any, position is warranted. If a bill tagged as “under review” doesn’t appear as if it will advance at all, we don’t allocate time or resources to

dig further into the details. We will certainly be adding more bills to our tracked list during the amendment process.

Each tracked bill is viewable on our website at www.isacoil.org. They are searchable by bill number, key word, policy category, and whether a bill would impose a new mandate, preempt local authority or reduce local revenues. They are also searchable using a cross section of criteria (e.g. all tracked bills opposed by ISACo that would impose a mandate and reduce local revenues).

An additional benefit of our tracked bill system is that it is available on our website 24/7 and can even be accessed from a smartphone or tablet. It’s “democratized” and easily available to everyone. Several of our counties have legislative committees or persons tasked with keeping tabs on legislation being considered by the General Assembly. Our tracked bill system is a great “go to” resource for their work because the relevant legislation is available and searchable in one place.

Our objective with the tracked bill system is to make relevant legislative information easily accessible for our members to increase their knowledge and therefore make them better advocates for their counties. And we want feedback and information from our members on issues to make ISACo staff more knowledgeable about what’s

important to our counties and how they are affected by issues. The end result, and our ultimate goal, is for counties to become stronger and more influential within the legislative process.

ISACo staff remains committed to advocating in support of counties in both Springfield and Washington, D.C. as we continually engage lawmakers on issues that matter.



As always, please feel welcome to contact me at (217) 679-3368 or jmccoy@isacoil.org if I can be of assistance. It is an honor to serve you. Thanks.

Illinois County Officials Attend NACo Legislative Conference

More than 60 Illinois county officials and staff attended the National Association of Counties (NACo) Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C.

On February 11, they attended a dinner hosted by ISACo and the United Counties Council of Illinois that was generously sponsored by ISACo corporate partner

PMA-IPRIME. Pictures from the dinner are available below.

NACo's Legislative Conference brings together nearly 2,000 elected and appointed county officials to focus on federal policy issues that impact counties and their residents. Conference attendees engaged in second-to-none

policy sessions and interacted with members of the 118th Congress and federal agency officials.

ISACo is pleased to partner with NACo and work with the Illinois Congressional Delegation to strengthen the critical federal, state and local intergovernmental partnership.

(NACo) Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C.
February 11, 2023



ISACo Joins Cook County Officials to Advocate for Federal Priorities at Luncheon

On February 15, ISACo and Cook County officials held a post-NACo Legislative Conference luncheon and social event in Chicago with several members of Illinois' Congressional Delegation. ISACo Executive Director Joe McCoy spoke about ISACo and NACo and thanked the Congresspersons for their support of counties through the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES), American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and other laws and programs that benefited counties. Thank you to Commissioners Stanley Moore (ISACo Board Member) and Donna Miller for their leadership, work and partnership with ISACo to organize this event.





GOVERNOR PRITZKER DELIVERS

STATE OF THE STATE AND BUDGET ADDRESS

Governor JB Pritzker delivered his annual State of the State and Budget Address on Wednesday, February 15.

This was the Governor's fifth State of the State and Budget Address, the first budget of his second term and the first time in two years that the address was delivered in-person to a joint gathering of the House and Senate in the House chamber. The last two budgets were delivered in alternative formats due to COVID restrictions in 2021 followed by a massive snowstorm which cancelled some session days in 2022.

The Governor's speech struck an optimistic tone, highlighting the fiscal accomplishments of his first term including eliminating the \$17 billion bill backlog, allocating \$2.3 billion into the Rainy Day Fund and using fiscal restraint to position Illinois for six credit rating upgrades. The Governor also noted that Illinois is using budget surpluses to chip away at long-term liabilities, including pension debt.

The proposed State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2024 budget allocates \$118.9 billion in All Funds spending, including more than \$49 billion in General Revenue Funds -- down \$349 million over FY23. Surpluses are projected in both the current and upcoming fiscal year: a \$303 million surplus for SFY 2024 and a \$1.368 billion surplus for SFY 2023.

The Governor contends the proposed budget is predicated on conservative revenue estimate, in light of predictions of a looming recession. The SFY 2024 budget assumes more than \$49 billion in base General Funds revenue, which is a \$1.4 billion (2.8%) decrease from revised SFY 2023 estimates. Individual income taxes are forecast to grow \$778 million (3.3%). Offsetting that projected increase are predicted declines: corporate income tax forecasts assume lower corporate profits; sales tax growth is projected to remain flat; transfers-in are expected to drop by \$1.279 billion; and federal revenues are expected to remain flat.

Human services will receive the largest spending increase at \$912 million. Education, including higher education, will receive the next largest increase at \$791 million. Healthcare costs will rise by \$709 million and public safety expenditures will increase by \$224 million.

Specifics from the proposed budget are available below:

Rainy Day Fund: The SFY 2024 proposed budget continues to prioritize stashing funds in the State's Budget Stabilization Fund (commonly referred to as the Rainy Day Fund). SFY 2024 targets \$138 million for the Budget Stabilization Fund, while the SFY 2023 budget is expected to receive \$1.174 billion from surpluses.

Pensions: The SFY 2024 proposed budget fully funds the state’s pension obligations while also setting aside \$200 million for the Pension Stabilization Fund.

Smart Start Illinois/Early Childhood Education: Governor Pritzker is proposing a four-year Smart Start Illinois plan that will ultimately create 20,000 additional seats in preschool programs. The proposed SFY 2024 budget allocates \$250 million for its first year, distributed as follows:

- ☑ \$75 million additional for the Early Childhood Block Grant at ISBE to create 5,000 preschool spots.
- ☑ \$130 million to begin funding Childcare Workforce Compensation Contracts to offer raises to childcare workers.
- ☑ \$40 million increase for early intervention programs to maintain services and offer provider wage increases.
- ☑ \$5 million to expand DHS Home Visiting Program to reach families in need of support.

In addition to the Smart Start Illinois funding, Governor Pritzker is proposing additional early childhood education funding, including:

- ☑ \$100 million to improve early childhood provider buildings and facilities.
- ☑ \$70 million to cover increases in the Child Care Assistant Program.
- ☑ \$20 million for DHS to revamp the payment system to providers.

K – 12 Funding: The SFY 2024 budget proposes an additional \$571 million for the Illinois State Board of Education. The Evidence-Based Funding Formula is increased by \$350 million. An additional \$86.4 million is allocated for transportation grants and special education grants. Another \$70 million is directed towards a new three-year pilot program to improve the teacher pipeline.

Higher Education: The SFY 2024 proposed budget calls for a \$219 million increase for higher education. MAP funding is increased by \$100 million. The Governor believes this boost -- combined with federally funded Pell grants - is sufficient to allow attendance of college free of tuition and fees for nearly every community college student and 40 percent of public university students (whose household incomes are at or below median income levels).

Public Universities and community college operations will receive a 7% increase (\$100 million) in the Governor’s proposed budget. Community college investments include: \$8.3 million for dual credit and one-credit workforce grant programs; \$11 million for development of advanced manufacturing; EV technology and data center workforce training programs; and \$750,000 to expand English language services.

Healthcare and Family Services: The SFY 2024 proposed budget allocates more than \$37 billion in All Funds, including \$9.070 billion in GRF to the Department of Healthcare and Family Services.

SFY 2024 Medicaid liability is projected to total \$25.88 billion in All Funds, with a total program enrollment of more than \$3.7 million (1.2% increase over SFY 2023). The SFY 2024 budget proposal allows for the end of the federal public health emergency; redeterminations will begin this Spring. The budget also reflects the Spring 2023 phase-out of the enhanced federal Medicaid match.

The proposed budget includes \$8 million for a “Ready to Renew” campaign to help Medicaid enrollees maintain their coverage or transition to other health insurance. The proposed budget includes funding to raise the asset limit for senior enrollees or those with a disability. Also included is \$100 million for increases in reimbursement rates for providers.

The “Healthcare Works Illinois” program would receive \$450 million over multiple years, aimed at preserving and expanding the healthcare workforce. Hospitals, clinics, behavioral health providers, home health workers, and others would be eligible for the funding -- monies can be used for such areas as expanding entry pipeline for healthcare workers, continuing education trainings for providers, and other vital investments in staff retention and recruitment. Other noteworthy investments include a \$3 million allocation towards the Healthcare Workforce Loan Repayment and Scholarship program; a \$25 million rate increase for physicians to broaden access to critical healthcare services; and \$25 million in continued funding for the Pipeline for the Advancement of Healthcare Workforce Program to train new nurses, medical assistants, lab techs, EMTs and others.

Homeless Prevention: The Governor is proposing a “Home Illinois” program, housed at the Department of Human Services, which will target the prevention of homelessness, provide crisis response, expand housing support and increase job opportunities for the homeless. An initial investment of \$350 million will include:

- ✔ \$26 million to provide homeless prevention services to 5,000 families.
- ✔ \$30 million to maintain court-based rental assistance.
- ✔ Over \$155 million to support unhoused populations seeking shelter and services.
- ✔ \$25 million in rapid re-housing services to 1,000 households.
- ✔ \$40 million for Permanent Supportive Housing.
- ✔ \$12.5 million to create 500 new scattered site permanent supportive housing units.
- ✔ \$37 million for Emergency Shelter Capital to create over 460 non-congregate shelter units.
- ✔ \$30 million to provide street outreach, medical respite, and other shelter diversion supports.
- ✔ \$5 million for a new workforce development pilot program to help homeless adults attain and retain employment.

Department of Human Services: The SFY 2024 proposed budget includes \$2 billion (\$200 million increase) for services for people with developmental disabilities in support of the *Ligas* consent decree. Also included is a \$50 million increase for TANF. The proposed budget includes \$10 million to fund the Children’s Behavioral Health Transformation for Comprehensive Community Based Youth Services and \$1.5 million for a care intake portal. An additional \$30.8 million is in the proposed budget to address growing caseloads with the Home Services Program and \$10 million is budgeted to support the Paid Leave for All Workers Act. Another \$32.5 million is targeted to increase forensic inpatient and outpatient services and support the *Williams* and *Colbert* consent decrees.

Department of Children and Family Services: The proposed SFY 2024 budget increases the DCFS budget by \$54.6 million. The proposed budget:

- ✔ Continues rate reform for private sector providers in order to address staffing shortages of social service workers at DCFS partner agencies.
- ✔ Allocates \$10 million towards the Lone Worker Safety Devices program for emergency communication and supportive partnership contracts with local sheriff offices, enhancing safety protocols and the acquisition and training in the use of items like defensive sprays.
- ✔ \$41 million for the main rollout of the Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System.
- ✔ Earmarks \$30 million for Level of Care Support Services capital grants to providers, helping to increase capacity for youth placement in the most clinically appropriate settings.

Illinois Department of Public Health: The proposed SFY 2024 budget includes \$45 million to support IT replacement for the Illinois’ National Electronic Disease Surveillance Systems and Long-Term Care systems. Another \$8.5 million is targeted to respond to unexpected public health threats and emergencies; \$18 million to support reproductive health initiatives (see below); \$7 million to improve public health communications in order to reduce health disparities; and \$2 million for mental health training for front-line workers in the pediatric field.

Reproductive Health: Reproductive health continues to be a priority for the Pritzker administration. The Governor calls for creating a new Reproductive Health Public Navigation Hotline to enable patients to call ahead for a risk assessment and find services such as transportation, lodging and insurance coverage options. The proposed budget also allocates \$5 million toward learning collaboratives for worker training to address the shortage of reproductive healthcare workers.

Other Funding Increase:

- ✔ \$27.4 million for the Community Care Program to serve an estimated 68,000 seniors.
- ✔ \$8 million for the Home-Delivered-Meals Program.
- ✔ \$17.5 million for two Illinois State Police Cadet classes.
- ✔ \$5.2 million for motor vehicle and body camera cloud storage.
- ✔ \$30 million for camera grants to local law enforcement.
- ✔ \$10 million for resources to local law enforcement agencies for recruitment of new officers and retention plans.
- ✔ \$20 million for the new Illinois Grocery Initiative to address food insecurity.
- ✔ \$40 million to support the Social Equity Cannabis Loan program.
- ✔ \$20 million to support Illinois entities seeking competitive federal awards that align with the state’s economic development plan.
- ✔ \$20 million for Fast-Track Workforce program to help employers do employee screening, recruitment and job training.
- ✔ Carries forward the \$400 million set aside from SFY 2023 for efforts that support job creation and business development through the Invest in Illinois Act closing fund.
- ✔ \$10 million for a multi-year initiative to develop and implement a one-stop business portal to assist individuals wishing to create new businesses or relocate a business to Illinois.
- ✔ \$10 million to start a Clean Energy Career and Technical Education pilot program, helping high schools to develop technical education programming on electric vehicle manufacturing.
- ✔ Maintains OSLAD grants for local governments for community park projects at its current level of \$56 million.
- ✔ LGDF is held flat at SFY 2023 levels.
- ✔ \$20.5 million for additional electric vehicle rebates.
- ✔ \$10 million in capital funding for new Lead Service Line Replacement Inventory grants.

Capital Budget: The proposed SFY 2024 budget includes more than \$46 billion in total capital appropriations (\$4.97 billion in new capital appropriations), including; \$3.3 billion for the Department of Transportation; \$1.1 billion for the Environmental Protection Agency; \$244.6 million for the Department of Natural Resource; \$151.5 million for the Capital Development Board; \$97.0 million for the Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity; and \$85.5 million for other State agencies. Highlights include \$100 million in new funding for early childhood education facilities, \$20 million for new Rebuild Illinois Downtowns and Main Streets awards for community revitalization and \$25 million to bolster the Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program.

Each year, the Governor proposes a budget for the following state fiscal year. The House and Senate will hold hearings during the spring to develop their own budget proposals. The Governor and General Assembly will then negotiate over differences with the goal of approving an agreed budget prior to adjournment. The General Assembly is scheduled to adjourn on May 19 this year.

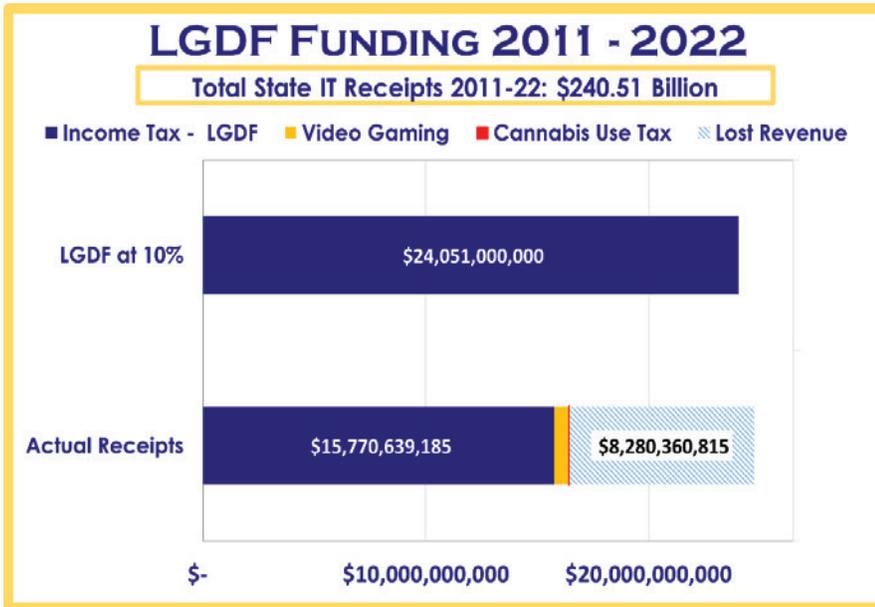


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ILLINOIS LOCAL GOVERNMENT DISTRIBUTIVE FUND

TOTAL LOST REVENUE: \$8,280,360,815

In 2011, the General Assembly reduced the percentage of income tax revenue that is allocated to local governments, promising that these cuts would be a temporary shared sacrifice. Over a decade later, **LGDF** is still not restored. The lost revenue totals **\$8.28 billion** statewide, which is equivalent to receiving **zero** LGDF dollars for over 4 years.



ESSENTIAL REVENUE

- o LGDF funds between **10-20%** of municipal operating budgets, or more in smaller cities.
- o Increasing LGDF will **reduce pressure on property taxes** & other revenue sources, especially in small and non-home rule communities.
- o **Cannabis & video gaming** revenues make up only **8.2%** of lost LGDF revenue, totaling **\$679 million** across the state since 2013. These revenues also do not equally benefit all communities as LGDF does.



FUNDING FOR PUBLIC SAFETY & INFRASTRUCTURE

City and county governments invest LGDF revenue, generated from our residents and businesses, into the essential services our communities rely on every day:

- o **Infrastructure** such as road and sidewalk repairs, water and sewer pipelines, stormwater management and flood prevention.
- o **Public Safety** salaries, pensions, & equipment for police and fire personnel.
- o **Community Services** such as snow removal, forestry, code enforcement, permitting, and economic development.

Local governments rely on LGDF now more than ever to implement **unfunded mandates** such as lead service line replacement, police body cameras & training requirements, and growing public safety pension obligations.

Restoring LGDF will allow city and county leaders across the state to make local investment decisions to improve the safety & quality of life of our communities.

WE ASK FOR YOUR SUPPORT TO RESTORE LGDF.



ISACo Corporate Partners Thanks for Your Support!



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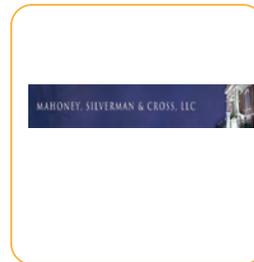
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Become an ISACo Corporate Partner!

ISACo's Corporate Partner Program was established to provide a forum for companies and organizations to build relationships with county officials while supporting the important work of ISACo.

The program offers five options for corporations and organizations to become associate members of ISACo while receiving benefits for this status.

Contact us for additional information about how your company or organization can become a part of ISACo.

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