



# Laborers' International Union of North America

## Midwest Regional Office

John F. Penn, LIUNA Vice President and Midwest Regional Manager

### Legislative Update

December 3, 2018

*Illinois lawmakers returned to Springfield last week for the final three days of the fall Veto Session. As the name suggests, the primary purpose of the two-week session is to determine whether the legislature will override the governor's vetoes of legislation it passed during the spring session, though action is not limited to vetoed bills. Current legislators are scheduled to return for two final "lame duck" session days in January prior to the January 9, 2019 swearing in of those elected in November. Governor-elect Pritzker and the other statewide officers will be sworn in on January 13<sup>th</sup>.*

#### Prevailing Wage Legislation Sees Late Action

Legislation was introduced last spring to beef up contractors' certified payroll reporting requirements for state and local government-funded construction projects. That bill, **SB 203**, gained momentum as its influential sponsors, **State Sen. Kim Lightford (D-Westchester)** and **State Rep. Will Davis (D-E. Hazel Crest)** continued their push to require contractors to report the gender, race and ethnicity of their employees, as well as whether they are veterans. From this information, the bill would require the Illinois Department of Labor (IDOL) to set employment goals for women and minorities on all government projects by the end of 2020.

Building trades unions successfully worked with the sponsors to convince them to add language that would establish union wage and benefit rates as the default prevailing wage rates. In so doing, the bill would eliminate the requirement that local governments adopt annual prevailing wage ordinances. It would also eliminate the mandate that local governments collect and maintain payroll records for five years. Instead, certified payrolls for state and local projects would be filed electronically with the IDOL beginning in April 2019.

SB 203 passed with strong bi-partisan majorities in both chambers last week, clearing the House 78-28-1 and passing the Senate 44-6. Identical wage setting language was previously vetoed by **Gov. Bruce Rauner (R)** in 2016 only to fall one vote shy of an override. However, by the time this bill reaches the governor's desk, J.B. Pritzker will be in office.

#### LIUNA Pushes Adoption of Green Building Code

Illinois does not have standardized regulations for "Green construction." As a result, some projects that require State approval, such as rainwater collection for flushing toilets or reusing soapy water for irrigation, have been held up.

LIUNA has previously promoted adoption of the Green Construction Code issued by the International Code Council (ICC) as a solution. That concept was introduced again last week in the form of an amendment to **SB 1226**, sponsored by **State Rep. Marty Moylan (D-Des Plaines)**. Moylan successfully moved the bill, which creates an optional code for commercial construction, out of committee over the objection of the Plumbers' Union and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). The Plumbers incorrectly argued that the bill would take work away from their members. The bill clearly does not - it is silent on the issue of craft jurisdiction. Further, any work that is required to be performed by a licensed plumber today under the Plumbing License Law would continue to be performed by a plumber if the bill passes. SB 1226 may receive a vote in the January "lame duck" session.

#### Pritzker Transition Team Committees Appointed

When a new governor is elected, it is customary to appoint a "transition team" to help develop the priorities of the new administration. **Governor-elect Pritzker** is following the tradition and has named nine different transition team committees thus far, with several more to come. Pritzker appointed **LIUNA Vice President and Midwest Regional Manager John Penn** to the panel most critical to construction Laborers: the "Restoring Illinois' Infrastructure" committee. It will be tasked with making suggestions on prioritizing a range of State construction needs, from roads and bridges to schools, state facilities and broadband internet access. Construction policies, such as use of Project Labor Agreements, will also likely be a topic of the committee's recommendations. **LIUNA Midwest Region Director of Governmental Affairs Sean Stott** was also appointed to the "Powering Illinois' Future" Committee, which will focus on energy and water infrastructure issues, among others. All committees will aim to complete their duties by the time Pritzker takes office in January.