

Illinois Community College Board

**SPRING 2019 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA**

The Illinois Community College Board is requested to approve the Spring 2019 Legislative Agenda and authorize board staff to introduce legislation in the Illinois General Assembly to enact the Agenda.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

It is recommended that the following motion be adopted:

The Illinois Community College Board hereby approves the following Spring 2019 Legislative Agenda and authorizes board staff to introduce legislation to enact Agenda:

1. Adult Education Statutory Revisions
2. Apprenticeships Grant Program
3. Business Enterprise Program for Community Colleges
4. Community College Joint Purchasing Authority

**BACKGROUND**

The Board's External Affairs Committee discussed potential legislation for the Spring 2018 legislative session and reported out to the full Board for discussion on November 30<sup>th</sup>.

**1. Adult Education Statutory Revisions**

The federal Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) is designed to strengthen and improve the nation's public workforce development system by helping Americans with barriers to employment, achieve high quality careers and helping employers hire and retain skilled workers. As a part of WIOA implementation, ICCB has identified statutory revisions to the State's Adult Education Act to ensure compliance with WIOA. The proposed revisions include modifications to required activities and updates to statutory language and definitions that incorporate career pathways, work-based learning, and Integrated Education and Training (IET) into adult education requirements. This proposal aligns with ICCB Goal 2 to contribute to the economic development of Illinois by providing robust workforce training, increasing credential attainment, closing the skills gap through talent pipeline management, and addressing the future needs of the workforce. As implementation of WIOA is occurring across the nation, many states have amended their adult education law to stress the transition of adult learners to sustainable careers and postsecondary opportunities.

**2. Apprenticeship Grant Program**

The proposed legislation would create a grant program to allow for the funding of apprenticeships at each of the 48 community colleges. This program would provide the resources necessary to adequately and appropriately meet the needs of business and industry providers that are interested in partnering with community colleges to provide apprenticeships, would allow for the recruitment of new partnerships across traditional apprenticeship fields (e.g. construction, manufacturing, etc.) and emerging fields (e.g. IT, Financial Services, Professional Services), and provide the resources to engage in curriculum development, oversight, and evaluation. This proposal aligns with ICCB Goal 2 to contribute to the economic development of Illinois by providing robust workforce training, increasing credential attainment, closing the skills gap through talent pipeline management, and addressing the future needs of the workforce. The legislation would ease barriers to innovative career and technical education programming while also maintaining rigorous quality standards. Spurred by the alignment of state education, workforce, and economic development agencies working toward a common goal, Illinois is poised to be a leader in the development of statewide apprenticeship. In Illinois, 53 percent of jobs require more training than a high school degree but less than a four-year college degree, yet only 43 percent of the workforce

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is trained at that level. Apprenticeships are one of the strategies that have proven effective at educating and training individuals for careers at middle skills positions (Steva, 2017). Community colleges often play a critical role in Registered Apprenticeship programs. They can develop the curriculum and provide the classroom instruction portion of an apprenticeship. They can provide college credits leading toward, or even completion of, an associate degree. As Registered Apprenticeship as a workforce development tool continues to flourish across the country, the roles for many community colleges are also growing. It is not uncommon for community colleges to screen apprenticeship applicants, work with economic and workforce development, or even act as the program sponsor, handling the administration of the Registered Apprenticeship program. However, community colleges in Illinois do not currently have the funding to fully implement apprenticeship programs. Because of the nature of the training, there is oversight required, extensive partnerships, and a long-term commitment by the institution necessary to meet the growing demand for this training approach. **The ICCB has requested a \$10 million appropriation to support this program.** The proposed legislation will be subject to appropriation.

### **3. Business Enterprise Program for Community Colleges**

ICCB staff is proposing technical changes to the Business Enterprise for Minorities, Women, and Persons with Disabilities (BEP) Act to clarify the data reporting processes for community colleges. Under these proposed changes, the ICCB will act as a link between the local community college districts (units of local government) and CMS/BEP Council (state entity). The proposed changes will also clarify the community college requirements relative to BEP Act references to the State Procurement Code and Chief Procurement Office that are only applicable to state agencies and public universities. P.A. 99-0462 amended BEP Act to expand applicability to community colleges. This act requires that when a community college awards a contract for insurance services, investment services, information technology services, accounting services, architectural and engineering services, and legal services, it shall be the aspirational goal of each community college to use businesses owned by minorities, women, and persons with disabilities for not less than 20% of the total amount spent on contracts for these services collectively. The Business Enterprise Council shall file an annual utilization report with the Governor and the General Assembly no later than March 1 of each year with data provided by the ICCB from each local community college district. The Act also requires community colleges to comply with all existing goals, reporting, and requirements of the Business Enterprise Program. While the completion of utilization report established for certain professional services are coordinated through the ICCB, other general reporting is required to be submitted directly to CMS. The Act is also written to comply with the State's procurement code; which as units of local government the community college system is not a part of. The first utilization report data was provided by the ICCB to CMS in 2017. The local colleges are continuing to discuss how to meet other reporting mandates given the challenges of the current language in the Act. This proposal aligns with ICCB Goal 3 to Engage with all stakeholders to align policies to improve outcomes and increase access to public information on system effectiveness.

### **4. Community College Joint Purchasing Authority**

The Illinois Public Community College Act (110 ILCS 805/3-27.1) requires contracts signed by local community colleges that are in excess of \$25,000 to be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder after advertisements. Under the current statute, joint purchases through non-governmental entities in excess of \$25,000 are required to be competitively bid by the college itself. The ICCB proposes to amend section 3-27.1 to allow for the purchase or lease of supplies and services which have been procured from a competitively bid group purchase contract, including, but not limited to, any purchasing entity operating under the U.S. General Services Administration, Higher Education Cooperation Act, or Midwestern Higher Education Compact Act (MHEC). P.A. 100-43 made numerous reforms to the Illinois Procurement Code including amendments to (30 ILCS 525/2) in regards to joint purchases. However, these changes were only applicable to entities under the Illinois Procurement Code; local community colleges are not governed by the Procurement Code. The Illinois Public Community College Act requires that competitive bidding for all contracts over \$25,000 with the exception of certain types of procurement. Because of this requirement purchases by community colleges through a group purchasing consortium such as the Midwestern Higher Education Compact would be subject to competitive bidding. The ICCB seeks legislation to exclude group purchases procured through a competitive process as an exemption to the competitive bid requirements. This proposal was filed previously as SB 2968 (Althoff / Spain). The bill passed the Senate 57-0 and was assigned to House Executive Committee, but never called for a vote.