



UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS
SYSTEM

OFFICE OF
GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

STATE RELATIONS END OF SESSION REPORT 2021



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Office of Governmental Relations Contact Information
www.ogr.uillinois.edu

OFFICES:

Chicago, IL

207 Administrative Office Building
1737 West Polk St., MC-976
Chicago, IL 60612

Springfield, IL

225 S. College St.
Suite 105
Springfield, IL 62704

TEAM:

State Relations

Jennifer Creasey
Phone: 217-333-1086
jcreasey@uillinois.edu

Nolan Drea
Phone: 217-823-0636
ndrea2@uillinois.edu

Local & State Relations

Angelica Alfaro
Phone: 312-391-4417
aalfaro@uillinois.edu

Office Administrator

Nicole Rakes
Phone: 217-300-8560
nharr2@uillinois.edu

Advocacy

Marissa Brewer
Phone: 217-333-1648
mccord3@uillinois.edu

Mitch Dickey
Phone: 217-300-5997
mdickey2@uillinois.edu

Theresa Thomas
Phone: 217-244-6436
tthoma36@uillinois.edu

Introduction

The following report covers work conducted by the University of Illinois System's Office of Governmental Relations (OGR) during the 2021 Illinois spring legislative session. 2021 was a legislatively robust year and introduced many challenges and changes. Lawmakers started session later than normal due to COVID-19 concerns and to allow the chambers to implement safety procedures. In a historic move, the Illinois House of Representatives elected Emanuel "Chris" Welch as the new Speaker of the House. The House and Senate conducted much of the early legislative process, committee meetings, and hearings remotely, and eventually utilized SHIELD Illinois COVID-19 testing for in-person legislating. Lobbyists were eventually allowed to return in person and with more vaccinations administered in the state, Illinois gradually progressed on its reopening plan.

OGR Mission

State, federal, and local support is essential to the U of I System and its efforts to provide a high-quality education, promote economic growth and opportunity, and produce cutting-edge research and scholarship. The mission of OGR is to support the U of I System by building and sustaining effective partnerships with state and federal government. This is achieved through advocacy of the system's needs and interests with elected officials and policymakers in Springfield, Washington, D.C., and throughout Illinois.

The U of I System is proud to provide the state with steady, responsible leadership in good times and bad. Throughout our long partnership with the state, we have a proven track record of serving Illinois as its land-grant institution and flagship university system.

Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Update

Despite the challenges presented in the 2021 legislative session, the Office of Governmental Relations is proud of the work the state relations team was able to accomplish. The 2021 session was legislatively robust, which resulted in an intense volume of legislation directly impacting the University of Illinois System. As outlined below, the state relations team was able to collaborate with legislators to negotiate solutions that worked for the U of I System, secure new funding for line items in the budget and capital request, and overall elevate the importance of the U of I System as a partner with the State of Illinois. The following outline shows the results of many months of work with members of the Illinois General Assembly:

SB2800 - Budget

Overall

- Flat for Public University Operations. \$637 million for the University of Illinois System
- \$25,000 increase for Hispanic Center for Excellence, now at \$698,800
- Statutory Level for Fire Service (\$4,694,700)
- New for U of I System:
 - \$769,000 for a University of Illinois Chicago (UIC) Government Finance Research Center's Water Rate Study from the COVID Emergency Fund
 - \$8 million for PRI Carbon Capture Tech (previously an appropriation to Department of Natural Resources and grant to PRI of \$2 million in FY21)
 - \$175,000 for PRI Carbon Capture Study
- Remaining Other State Funds for U of I System at FY21 level

ISAC

- \$28,224,300 (6.3%) increase to MAP to \$479,566,200
- \$35,900 (2.9%) increase for Dependents Grants
- \$50 million to Prepaid Tuition Trust Fund and a supplemental for FY21 of \$20 million. All from GRF for College IL.
- \$55 million from SLOF for Early Childhood Programs
- \$35 million for AIM high funding

SURS

- \$102,512,000 (5.8%) increase from GRF for State Contribution to \$1,883,279,000
- \$3 million increase (1.4%) from State Pension Fund to \$218,000,000

IBHE

- New GRF: \$1 million for Common App, \$250,000 for Strategic Plan, \$500,000 for Public Higher Ed Assessment in Quad Cities, \$500,000 GYO at EIU
- Federal Grants: \$30 million Early Childhood Programs, \$43 million Governor's Emergency Education Relief

Capital

- All past capital projects have been reappropriated, including our revised language for the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) Chicago Quantum Exchange

- New capital appropriation of \$65 million for the Clinical Decision Unit at UI Health
- Changes to an appropriation go to the Illinois Board of Higher Education in accordance with the purposes of satisfying Private Colleges and Universities Capital Distribution Formula Act for the JMLS grant

HB2017 - Budget Implementation Plan - Passed both Chambers

- Allows UIUC to enter into a long-term lease with the University of Chicago for the Chicago Quantum Exchange
- One-year extension to exempt our investment portfolio vendor from a RFP, exemption extended to June 2022
- Provides for the implementation of the Coronavirus Vaccine Incentive Public Health promotion in the Illinois Lottery Law

The full FY22 budget breakdown for Illinois public universities can be found [here](#).

2021 Priority Bill Highlights

[HJR43](#) - U of I Caucus Support - Passed House

Resolution for the 102nd General Assembly to establish and support the U of I caucus.

[HB796](#) - Community College transfer to UIUC - Passed both Chambers

In early session, Rep. Deanne Mazzochi introduced a bill that would automatically admit the top 10% of each high school class to UIUC. We opposed this bill in committee. Instead, we offered to work with her on an automatic transfer program from an Illinois community college. We drafted this language to say that if you attend a community college and maintain a 3.0 GPA, you will automatically be admitted to any university in the U of I System after graduation.

[SB521](#) - Sports betting in the broader gaming bill - Held in Senate

We opposed a measure that would allow sports betting on Illinois universities. UIUC Director of Athletics Josh Whitman led all of the Illinois Division I schools in opposition. Language was included in a last-minute bill for the gaming industry. The provision would allow betting on Illinois university teams only, not any individuals. Betting would only be allowed at brick and mortar locations, not online. Sunsets in two years.

[HB1855](#) - DCEO Innovation Voucher Program - Passed both Chambers

This legislation will boost economic activity and job growth by creating R&D partnerships between businesses and universities in the state, boosting both business competitiveness and university research funding. Vouchers will be awarded to in-state businesses to help offset the cost of R&D or business assistance engagement with an Illinois college or university. Vouchers will match up to 75% of the cost of an innovation partnership, not to exceed \$75,000. The vouchers will target key industries (Agribusiness and Ag Tech, Energy, Information Technology, Life Sciences and Healthcare, Manufacturing, Transportation and Logistics), women and minority-owned businesses, and businesses located in economically depressed areas of the state.

[HB2567](#) - Higher Education Procurement clean up - Held on House concurrence - *needs follow-up*

The U of I System drafted legislation to provide regulatory relief. The changes are as follows: corrects a routine audit finding received by the universities regarding the posting of the annual farm or food purchases; Illinois Vendors are required to certify with three main “bodies” before receiving an award from a State Agency or Institution of Higher Education, SOS, BOE, and IDHR; should a vendor submit a response lacking either SOS or BOE they are allowed to cure that deficiency and are not immediately deemed non-responsive, this same cure will be allowed for lack of IDHR certification; sets a threshold for certification completion; aligns the exemption posting with the small-dollar threshold requiring the posting of “traditional” purchases; limits on the Chief Procurement Officer for higher education.

[HB2878](#) - ECE CC four-year program - Passed both Chambers

The new Early Childhood Education Consortium language requires IBHE and ICCB to establish the Access Consortium for Equity of Illinois higher education institutions, which will focus on streamlining, coordinating, and improving accessibility of degree completion pathways for upskilling educational pipelines. Consortium members shall operate jointly to provide streamlined paths to associate’s, bachelor’s, master’s degrees and certificates, Gateway credentials and other licensure endorsements in early childhood education.

HB3438 – Dream Resources - Passed both Chambers

In the 2022-23 academic year, HB3428 will require universities and community colleges to designate an employee as an Undocumented Student Liaison. The liaison will be available on campus with space to provide assistance to undocumented students and those of mixed status households by removing barriers and providing access to financial aid and academic support to successfully matriculate to degree completion. Each liaison will receive training by the Illinois Dream Fund and is to include two co-chairs on campus to assist and review policies and procedures to provide equitable access to students.

SB166 - Supplier Diversity - Passed both Chambers - *needs follow-up legislation*

Illinois legislative black caucus measure to promote additional minority supplier diversity that will make the task of procuring very challenging.

SB581 – File-only contracts - Passed both Chambers

Currently, the procurement code requires universities and agencies entering contracts exceeding \$20,000 of locally held funds (contracts that do not obligate funds held within the State treasury) to file a copy of that contract with the IOC within 30 days. IOC serves only as a repository for these contracts. SB581 eliminates this filing requirement and, instead, requires a quarterly report outlining the contract specifications and scope, not currently captured in reporting, to the IOC. This report will be made public, and each individual contract will remain available for FOIA inspection through the agency or university.

SB815 - Higher Education Funding Formula - Passed both Chambers

We opposed an originally drafted bill that would create a funding formula for higher education based only on equity. We worked with the sponsor to amend the language to create a commission with broad representation to look at a funding formula for higher education based on a number of different metrics, including equity, research, graduate and professional students, healthcare, innovation, and economic development.

SB1697 - Exempt Higher Education from GATA - Support (U of I bill) - Passed both Chambers

The Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) applies federal uniform guidance (UG) grant making principles to state and federal flow-through awards issued from Illinois' state agencies to public universities. The Act is more restrictive than the federal government and does not recognize the difference between state agencies and institutions of higher education, producing significant barriers and administrative impacts to public universities. SB1697 reforms GATA for Illinois' public universities by improving the application of uniform guidance to state grant making processes, which includes amending the Act to recognize that institutions of higher education fall under a different set of UG principles for a variety of cost considerations.

SB2103 - SURS automatic enrollment - Passed both Chambers

We worked with the State University Retirement System on an amendment to its bill that would automatically enroll all university employees in the SURS 457 program. We argued this would create confusion with our own 403b program as well as the CMS 457 that our employees are eligible to participate in. This bill changes the date for auto-enrollment from July 1, 2022, to July 1, 2023. Auto-enrollment will only apply to persons who first become participants of SURS on or after July 1, 2023. It also removes the State Deferred Compensation Plan as an option for persons who first become participants of SURS on or after July 1, 2023. Such persons will be auto-enrolled into the 457(b) plan offered by SURS. We will also continue to offer our 403b plan to all employees.

SB2338 - Name Image and Likeness - Passed both Chambers

The U of I System worked with the Speaker and the sponsors to draft SB2338. The bill promotes the evolution of the modern collegiate athletics model by enabling today's student-athletes to market themselves in a fashion similar to other students attending our institutions. The bill includes a set of principles that allows our student-athletes to earn compensation for commercial use of their name, image, likeness, and voice, while at the same time establishing needed guidelines to shield them from bad actors, to protect the integrity and core principles of collegiate athletics, and to honor the academic mission of our institutions.

Other

Legislative Map Redistricting

Following several weeks of public hearings, Illinois House and Senate Democrats released the new legislative maps that are redrawn every 10 years. The new Senate and House districts can be viewed [here](#) and [here](#). Typically, the maps are redrawn using census data from the most recent census. However, because the census was delayed due to COVID-19, Democratic leadership opted to use the most recent data from the American Community Survey. Democrats have cited legal experts and precedents set by other states that they claim allows them to use the American Community Survey, but Republicans and some reform-based good government groups disagree and are arguing that the maps should not be drawn until census data is available.

However, the Illinois Constitution requires the legislative maps be passed by the General Assembly before June 30. If the General Assembly fails to approve the maps before the June 30 deadline, a bipartisan commission will draw the new maps instead. This is a significant incentive for Democrats, who maintain supermajorities in the House and Senate, to pass their maps now using the American Community Survey.

Because of these disagreements, we expect lawsuits to be filed over the summer that may result in new legislative maps. The analysis below reflects the maps that were passed by the General Assembly in the 2021 legislative session.

Higher Education Big Picture

Under the new map, several more four-year public universities are expected to be represented by Democratic legislators. Northern Illinois University, Western Illinois University, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, University of Illinois Springfield and Illinois State University are all currently represented by Republicans in both chambers of the legislature but are expected to be in Democratic-held districts in the new map. Democrats are expected to continue to hold large majorities in both the House and Senate for the next several years, so we believe it is a positive sign for higher education as a whole that more universities will be represented by members of the majority party.

UIUC

The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign will still be directly represented by U of I champions Rep. Carol Ammons (D-Urbana) and Sen. Scott Bennett (D-Urbana). UIUC's other local champions, Sen. Chapin Rose (R-Mahomet) and Rep. Mike Marron (R-Danville) will continue to represent the areas surrounding UIUC. Overall, the new map does not make many significant changes for UIUC.

UIS

Unlike UIUC, the University of Illinois Springfield will most likely have both a new senator and state representative. Previously in Sen. Steve McClure's (R-Springfield) district, UIS will now be represented by Sen. Doris Turner (D-Springfield). Sen. Turner is newly appointed to replace previous Sen. Andy Manar (D-Bunker Hill), but has a longstanding relationship with UIS. Rep. Mike Murphy (R-Chatham) has also been replaced by Rep. Tim Butler (R-Springfield). Rep. Butler is a member of the U of I Caucus and both UIS and the Office of Government Relations have worked with him on several occasions. Rep. Murphy has been drawn into the same district with another republican legislator, so it is difficult to predict if he will remain in the General Assembly.

UIC

The University of Illinois Chicago and UI Health Hospital will continue to be represented by Rep. Lakesia Collins (D-Chicago) and Sen. Patricia Van Pelt (D-Chicago), both members of the U of I Caucus.

DPI

The Discovery Partnership Institute's proposed location of 15th Street and Wells Street in Chicago will continue to be represented by Rep. Sonya Harper (D-Chicago) and Sen. Mattie Hunter (D-Chicago).

Click below to see the current status of bills tracked by OGR sorted by topic area:

Issue Areas

Administrative Burden
Admissions
Appropriations (Capital)
Appropriations (Operating)
Athletics
Board of Trustees
Campus Specific (UIC)
Campus Specific (UIUC)
Campus Specific (UIS)
Ethics
Financial Aid
FOIA
Healthcare/Hospital
Maternal Health
Medicaid
HR
Labor
Procurement
Research
U of I Legislative Agenda

Quorum Bill List

[Click here](#)
[Click here](#)

2021 Advocacy in Action

STATE

January 8: Call-to-Action to U of I System faculty, staff, and students involved in research

Researchers across the U of I System were asked to write a letter to the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) to emphasize the incredible importance of research and encourage them to add research into their strategic plans. As a result of the campaign, advocates sent 18 personal letters to the IBHE.

January 25: Call-to-Action to Illinois Connection advocates and other U of I System stakeholders

Illinois Connection advocates were asked to write a personal letter to their state legislators about the unique impact the U of I System has had on their life or about the impactful work they do as a part of the U of I System. This ongoing effort has engaged 127 advocates who have written 239 unique letters to their state legislators.

February 19: State Internship Zoom Panel for students

OGR and the Student Advocacy Coalition hosted a panel to discuss interning in Springfield or Chicago. Attendees heard from a panel of alumni about legislative internship opportunities available in Illinois, how to apply, and their experiences as interns.

February 22: ILGA U of I Caucus Meeting

OGR hosted a closed meeting of the U of I Caucus in the Illinois General Assembly. This meeting was an opportunity for members of the Illinois General Assembly who are part of the U of I System Caucus to engage with our system leaders, President Tim Killeen and Executive Vice President Barb Wilson.

Week of February 22: Illinois public university joint Call-to-Action

OGR partnered with the other Illinois public universities to launch a joint Call-to-Action asking for support for higher education funding to coincide with the Governor's state of the state and budget address. This campaign engaged 631 advocates who sent 1,266 emails to their state legislators. In addition to the Call-to-Action, OGR coordinated a joint letter from the alumni association board presidents at all of Illinois' public universities to members of the ILGA and the Governor asking for support for Illinois higher education.

March 5: "Coffee with Killeen-State Priorities" Zoom Webinar

OGR hosted a "Coffee with Killeen" Zoom webinar where invitees included alumni living in Illinois as well as Illinois Connection advocates who live in Illinois. President Killeen gave an update about the U of I System and had a conversation on the system's state agenda for the new Illinois General Assembly. This webinar included a question-and-answer session where alumni were able to submit questions for President Killeen to answer.

January-March: New Member Meetings

OGR hosted "New Member Meetings" with incoming and new members of the Illinois General Assembly who were either newly elected in the 2020 General Election or appointed during session. These meetings focused on introducing new members to the University of Illinois System, highlighting the impact of the system on their district, and discussing the U of I System's legislative agenda and resources for them as legislators. In total, staff hosted meetings with 22 new members.

April 27-29: System Virtual U of I Day in the Illinois Capitol

Invitation-only event brought together students from across the U of I System to raise the system's profile and advance its state agenda. The event included meetings with members of the ILGA who represent the university campuses. Twenty meetings were held with members of congress and/or their staff.

May 3: Call-to-Action State Budget

A Call-to-Action went out to all alumni, staff, students, faculty, and Illinois Connection advocates asking for support for an increase to higher education funding.

Ongoing: State legislator in-district meetings via zoom

Illinois Connection advocates and student leaders have joined OGR for meetings with members of the ILGA to personally share their U of I story on Zoom meetings. In total, Illinois Connection hosted 31 in-district meetings between March and the end of session with 32 state legislators. These meetings engaged nearly 500 advocates from across Illinois who participated and shared their personal story with their state legislators.

LOCAL**February 1: Meeting with President Killeen and Inaugural Chicago U of I Caucus**

President Killeen and Chicago City Clerk Anna Valencia hosted the inaugural Chicago U of I Caucus meeting. President Killeen provided an update on the state of the U of I System, collaborative research initiatives, including the saliva-based PCR tests, UI Health, the Discovery Partnership Institute and the importance and impact of continued investment in higher education. The newly formed caucus will consist of aldermen, Cook County commissioners and Metropolitan Water Reclamation District commissioners who are alumni from one of the system's three universities, represent one of the campuses or have a tie to the U of I System. Thirty elected officials have been invited to join the caucus and will meet again in the summer of 2021.

Meetings with Local Elected Officials and Civic Organizations

OGR also serves as a liaison to the Discovery Partnership Institute, I-MMÁS System initiative (Illinois-Mexican and Mexican American Students) and the U of I Extension Illini Science Policy Program. OGR coordinates meetings with Chicago stakeholders to build awareness and partnerships, offer opportunities to the Chicago community and engage students, alumni, and diverse businesses to participate in current initiatives. OGR also coordinates meetings with President Killeen, local elected officials and leaders from prominent Chicago civic organizations to provide an overview of the system-wide local and state economic impact, leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic and seeking potential ways to partner to strengthen the footprint of the U of I System in Chicago.

Meetings with UI Health and Chicago Mile Square Clinics Elected Officials

OGR serves as a liaison to UI Health and Chicago Mile Square Clinics that serve underrepresented communities to offer access and awareness of services, health equity education and vaccines during the COVID-19 pandemic, and will continue with a focus on Chicago aldermen, Cook County commissioners and members of the Chicago and Illinois Black and Latino Caucuses.

Meetings with Chicago City Clerk and Staff

In addition, there are ongoing efforts with the Chicago City Clerk's office to utilize our top research universities and the Institute of Government and Public Affairs to reform current policies that impact the lives of Chicago's underserved population.

OTHER EFFORTS

Meetings with UIAA Clubs and Networks

OGR Staff joined the UIAA Clubs Zoom call to present on our legislative initiatives and upcoming advocacy efforts. Club members were encouraged to join Illinois Connection and to participate in the current share your story campaign.

April 9: Pregame Pep Rally for Big 10 Tournament:

Invitation-only event invited members of the Illinois Legislative General Assembly, members of Congress and their staff, alumni staffers, alumni working in government and Illinois Connection Advocates for a pregame pep rally ahead of the first Big 10 Tournament Illini basketball game. This event included Deon Thomas as the emcee and other former players as guest speakers.

Meetings with Cultural Houses, Departments and Alumni Networks

OGR initiated meetings with programs that serve a diverse population across the U of I System to learn more about overall Diversity, Equity and Inclusion efforts, including UIUC's La Casa Cultural Latina and Bruce D. Nesbitt African American Cultural Center, Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Relations, the Illinois Latina/o, Alumni Association and the Black Alumni Network, UIS Diversity Center, UIC Institute for Race and Policy, Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement, the Hispanic Center of Excellence and Urban Health Program. As a result, our advocacy and state teams were able to advocate for resources and will continue to hold these meetings to ensure the system continues to keep the experiences of under-resourced communities at the forefront.