



ILLINOIS STATE ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

COUNTY

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2020

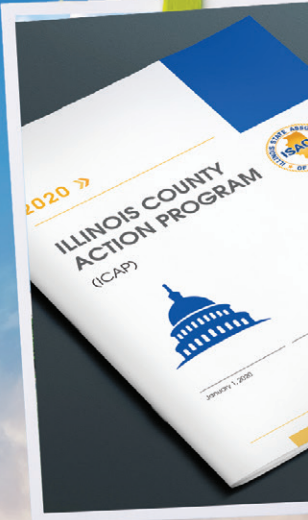
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A Message from the President



By: Deborah Sims, Cook County Commissioner

The calendar has turned to 2020 and the Illinois State Association of Counties (ISACo) continues to aggressively expand our operations toward the fulfillment of our mission to unite and support Illinois counties.

ISACo had 11 member counties at its inception in 2018. I'm excited to report that we have reached 22 member counties as of this writing.

ISACo member counties represent 75 percent of the state's population.

Each new member county brings its own unique experiences and insights to the association. These additional voices build up our collective strength and support our growing voice in support of counties and their issues.

ISACo now has three staff members in our Springfield office to further support counties as we grow. The most recent position created by ISACo is that of policy analyst to support our legislative program. This position was filled in January 2020. In addition, we have contracts with two different lobbying firms and have six registered lobbyists working on our behalf to represent counties at the Illinois Statehouse.

ISACo developed our first proactive legislative agenda and unveiled this agenda in early January 2020. Additional information about our legislative agenda is available in this newsletter.

ISACo is planning several events for 2020, including meetings between county officials and legislators throughout the state, a county lobby day, training opportunities and social events for Illinois attendees during

National Association of Counties (NACo) conferences to be held this year.

I'm pleased to announce that ISACo also has a candidate running for NACo Second Vice President. Will County Board Speaker Denise Winfrey filed her paperwork and will launch a vigorous campaign for this important NACo office. Should she emerge victorious, Denise would be on track to serve as NACo's President. As President, Denise would be in a position to appoint Illinois county officials to leadership positions on critical steering committees that influence federal public policies. Having an Illinois county official serving as NACo President would be a very prestigious honor for our state.

ISACo has a busy year ahead as we continue to evolve into a respected and influential association working to support and improve our counties. We look forward to your participation.

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A Message from the Executive Director

By: Joe McCoy, Executive Director

On January 6, 2020, the Illinois State Association of Counties (ISACo) announced our 2020 Illinois County Action Program (ICAP).

The ICAP is ISACo's first proactive annual legislative agenda for Illinois counties and was formulated based upon proposals submitted by our member counties. Each proposal was approved by our Legislative Committee and adopted by ISACo's Board of Directors.

This newsletter includes a summary of the proposals approved by the Board. The ICAP is also available on our website at www.isacoil.org. County officials and staff are encouraged to review our agenda and assist ISACo in lobbying for passage of those proposals most beneficial to their county.

It should be noted that ISACo is pleased to entertain the pursuit of new proposals brought to us throughout the year. Each legislative proposal idea will be placed before our Legislative Committee and Board of Directors. If approved, the proposal will be added to our official agenda.

In addition to the legislation ISACo develops and introduces for consideration by the General Assembly, we review each and every introduced bill, amendment and resolution to identify those that affect, or are of interest to counties. These bills are added to our tracked bill list and made available on our website for county officials and staff to review. ISACo takes positions on many of these bills, amendments and resolutions.

County governments are served by various officials and staff who themselves are members of designated "affiliate" groups (e.g., clerks, auditors, treasurers, etc.). Each of these groups pursue legislative initiatives to address issues pertinent to their specific and official functions. ISACo looks forward to using our advocacy resources to assist these groups when we are able to do so.

Finally, if your county is working with a legislator or contract lobbyist in support of legislation introduced to address a local issue, please let ISACo know how we can be of assistance.

We look forward to robustly engaging with the Illinois General Assembly to influence legislation that benefits counties.



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.

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www.isacoil.org

Kendall County Board Chairman

Witnesses Trade Deal Signing

Kendall County Board Chairman Scott Gryder was invited by the White House to attend the signing of the Phase One Trade Agreement between the United States and China.

Kendall County is a member of ISACo. ISACo helped to facilitate the invitation to ensure a county presence from Illinois.

The Agreement, signed on Wednesday, January 15, 2020, requires structural reforms to China's economic and trade regime in the areas of intellectual property, technology transfer, agriculture, financial services, and currency and foreign exchange. The deal also includes a commitment by China to future purchases of U.S. goods and services, plus a strong dispute resolution system that ensures prompt and effective implementation and enforcement.

Chairman Gryder issued a statement that was included by the White House among other messages of support.



Kendall County Chairman at the White House

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"This agreement helps level the playing field, and we could not be more pleased by the efforts of President Trump and the administration. Our farmers will reap the benefits of this trade agreement being signed today."

- Statement by Kendall County Chairman Scott Gryder -

ISACo Corporate Partners Thanks for Your Support!



Wight & Company



Christopher B. Burke
Engineering



2im Group



Comcast



AT&T



Nationwide



United HealthCare

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.

News & Views e-Newsletter Subscription



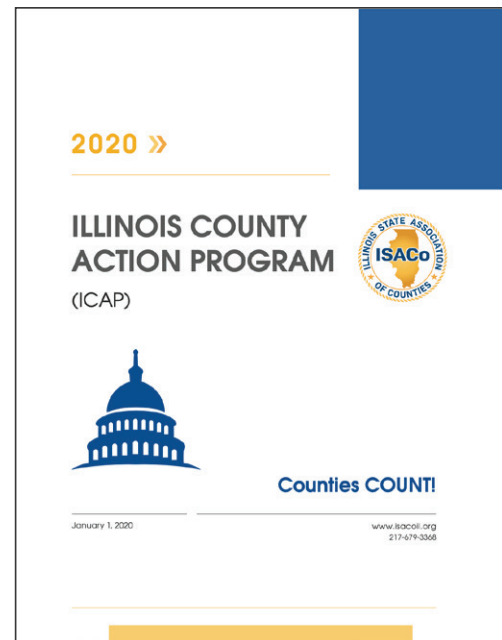
Are you receiving our
ISACO NEWS & VIEWS
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If not, please check your spam folder to make sure our newsletter is not being blocked. Otherwise, please e-mail Brenna Metrow at bmetrow@isacoil.org with a request to be added.

***Don't miss out
on these valuable
ISACo updates!***

ISACo Announces Illinois County Action Program (ICAP)



The following legislative proposals have been approved for introduction and pursuit in 2020 by the Illinois State Association of Counties (ISACo) Board of Directors. Visit ISACo's website at www.isacoi.org for more information about each proposal.

EXPAND LOCAL OPTION MOTOR FUEL TAX (MFT) TO ALL NON-HOME RULE COUNTIES

Expand authority to impose a county MFT not to exceed 8 cents per gallon to all non-home rule county boards for the ongoing maintenance and construction of essential infrastructure. **HB4695**

ESTABLISH AN 80% FUNDING TARGET FOR THE ILLINOIS MUNICIPAL RETIREMENT FUND (IMRF)

Establish an 80% funding target for IMRF to reduce the mandatory annual employer contribution while maintaining a strong financial position for IMRF. **HB4078**

STAKEHOLDER OBSERVATION OF IMRF TRUSTEE ELECTIONS

Amend the IMRF statute to require IMRF to allow the counting of ballots during IMRF Board of Trustee elections to be observed by associations representing participating local governments and labor unions that represent participating employees. **HB4457**

AUTHORIZE ALL NON-HOME RULE COUNTIES TO REGULATE SPECIFIC ADULT USE FACILITIES

Expand the regulatory authority provided in the law to all non-home counties. **SB3513**

CLEAN-UP STATUTE CONCERNING DUPLICATE TOWNSHIP NAMES

Amend the statute to require that a county change a duplicate township name only if the duplicate names exist within a single county. **SB3162**

ALLOW COUNTY BOARDS TO BE “CO-EMPLOYERS” IN LABOR NEGOTIATIONS

Amend the law to consider the county board as a “co-employer” when the circuit clerk’s office and chief judge are involved in labor negotiations with their respective bargaining units. This will allow the county board, as the appropriating body, to participate in the negotiations. **HB4420**

ELIMINATE EXCESSIVE TOWNSHIP INFLUENCE OVER COUNTY ZONING DECISIONS

Remove the provision that allows an objection by a township with a plan commission to increase the vote threshold necessary for a county board to approve a zoning ordinance or resolution in a county with fewer than 600,000 residents. **SB3826**

ELECTION OF COUNTY BOARD CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON

Require the chairperson and vice-chairperson to be elected by a majority of those elected to the board instead of a majority of those present at the meeting during which the election is held. Permit the vice-chairperson to fill a vacancy left by a departed chairperson only until a new chairperson is elected and not automatically for the remainder of a two-year term. **SB3622**

REVOCATION OF SPECIAL USE ORDINANCES

Allow county boards to revoke a special use ordinance or permit when a property for which a special use ordinance or permit was granted becomes host to activities endangering the health, safety and welfare of the public. **SB2466**

PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT INCENTIVE

Authorize taxing districts to order the county clerk to abate any portion of what is found to be surplus revenue while allowing for the amount of the abated revenues to be included in the following year’s aggregate extension base. **HB5043**

COLLECTING UNPAID TAXES RESULTING FROM ERRONEOUS HOMESTEAD EXEMPTIONS

Authorize all counties to review the past three years of property taxes paid by a taxpayer when the taxpayer is found to have improperly claimed a homestead exemption. Unpaid taxes would be collected and the county may impose interest on the amount of the unpaid taxes. **HB5455**

ALLOW COUNTY BOARD TO RETAIN LEGAL COUNSEL

Authorize county boards to contract with outside legal counsel without the need for permission from the state’s attorney. **HB4854**

ALLOW WEBSITE POSTING OF PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS

Allow county governments to meet the property assessment publication mandate by either publishing the information on a county website or in a newspaper of general circulation in the county. Allowing counties to fulfill the publication mandate on their websites would save taxpayers thousands of dollars annually and the information would be more accessible to the public. **SB3143**

Will County Speaker Winfrey Aims for NACo Leadership Role

Will County Board Speaker Denise Winfrey is in the running for 2nd Vice President of the National Association of Counties (NACo) and is seeking the support of Illinois county officials. As 2nd Vice president, Winfrey would be in line to become the president of NACo in 2022. If elected, Winfrey would be one of three NACo presidents to come out of Illinois and would be only the second woman of color to ever hold the position.

"I am honored to be running for this prestigious post of our national governing organization," Winfrey said. "But most importantly, this position will shine a spotlight on Illinois and all of the wonderful things that our diverse counties embody. As a life-long resident of Illinois, it is my goal to showcase all of the economic, cultural, and historic amenities that our state has to offer from Alexander County to Jo Daviess County and everywhere in-between."

Winfrey has been an active member of NACo since 2009 and has served in multiple leadership roles during that time, including serving as a NACo Ambassador, Vice Chair of Community Economic and Workforce Development, and a member of the Healthy Counties Advisory Committee, among other roles. Winfrey was also a leading champion for the creation of the Illinois State Association of Counties (ISACo).

DuPage County Board Member and ISACo Vice-President Jim Healy said Winfrey's election to the national post would bring benefits to the entire state of Illinois. "I cannot think of a more qualified and better equipped leader than Denise Winfrey to hold a leadership position at NACo," Healy said.

At their December 2019 meeting, the Will County Board passed a resolution

unanimously endorsing Speaker Denise Winfrey for the position as NACo 2nd Vice President. Will County is a unique microcosm of Illinois in that the county is comprised of both sparsely populated rural areas and densely populated urban areas. Winfrey says Will County's diversity helps her understand the importance of inclusion.

"Everyone needs a seat at the table," said Winfrey. "My platform is one of inclusion because every voice counts regardless of whether someone is from a rural, suburban or urban area and without regard to their racial and ethnic background or religious belief. Everyone's input is valuable to creating vibrant communities throughout our state." Speaker Winfrey's conviction about inclusiveness is also a core theme for ISACo.

As 2nd Vice President, Winfrey would be eligible to host a NACo Board Meeting in Will County, with possible events in other surrounding counties. This is an opportunity to change the narrative that people hear about Illinois.

"Illinois is a great state full of wonderful, diverse people, and lots of great opportunities for recreation and business," said Winfrey.

With a population of over 700,000 residents, Will County is the fourth largest county in Illinois and created nearly 6,000 new jobs in 2019 while generating more than \$2 billion in investments. Will County is also home to the largest inland port in North America and has played a major role in shipping and logistics for nearly two centuries since the completion of the Illinois & Michigan Canal, sections of which have been preserved because of its historical significance.



Denise Winfrey, Will County Board Speaker

"I've come to know Denise Winfrey as a true champion of counties in Illinois," said ISACo Executive Director Joe McCoy. "She understands the unique needs of county government and she knows how to affect the kind of change that can improve economies, which leads to stronger services delivered to constituents."

Kane County Board Chairman Chris Lauzen announced he would not be pursuing a third term. ISACo has enjoyed working with Chairman Lauzen and wishes him well in all future endeavors!



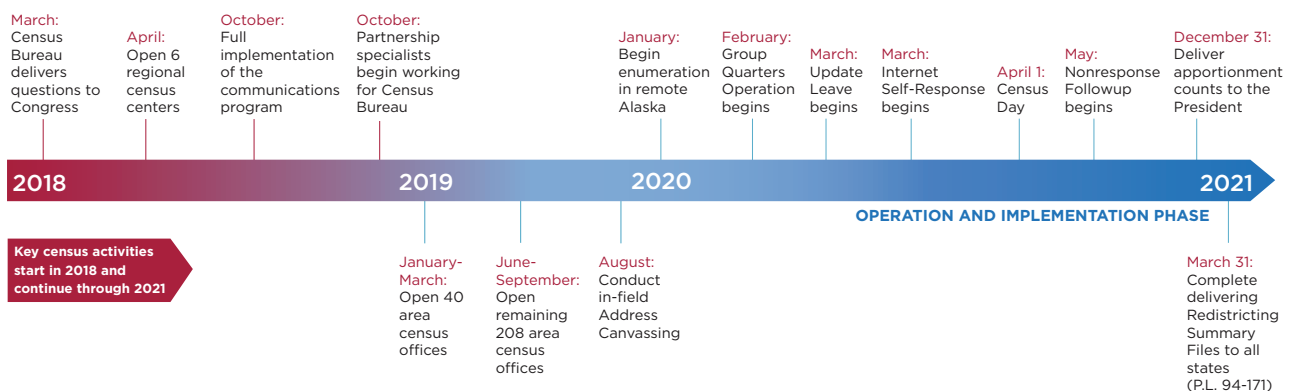
Chris Lauzen, Kane County Board Chairman



On Wednesday, January 15, 2020, ISACo Executive Director Joe McCoy participated in a hearing of the Joint Commission on Ethics and Lobbying Reform in Chicago. Director McCoy testified in support of local control over registering lobbyists seeking to influence county government.

Road to the 2020 Census

2020 Census Operational Timeline



Longtime NACo Member Seeks

County Lapel Pins

JIM HEALY IS THE VICE PRESIDENT OF ISACO

CountyNews Reprint By: Charlie Ban, County News Digital Editor & Senior Writer

Jim Healy can pinpoint exactly when he knew he wanted to be involved in NACo. Now he is hoping to collect roughly 3,100 other pin points.

"My first year on the (DuPage County, Ill.) Board, I went to the Annual Conference and knew this was something I wanted to be involved in," he said. "It was obvious it was a great organization and one my county should do more with."

Do More

Counties may send their pins to:

Jim Healy
835 McClintock Drive
Burr Ridge, IL 60527

Healy, who is retiring from the DuPage County Board of Commissioners next fall, is putting the word out for counties

across the country to send him their lapel pins that bear the county names and seals. State associations, too. He would like to give that collection to NACo as a way of demonstrating, in physical form, how important the organization has been to him.

"I've always collected the pins, I like to trade mine for other people's," he said. "There are a lot of fabulous looking pins out there, it's been fun. I figured I would tie that to my leaving. It might take me a year or two after I leave to get them all."

Those interactions that would lead to pin exchanges have been central to his time with NACo, which has spanned various committee memberships, including chairmanship of the Transportation Steering Committee.

"I've been chairman of every steering committee there is in transportation," he said. "That's been my interest since Day One."

Healy is a real estate attorney who was appointed to the DuPage County Board in 1998 and elected outright in 2000. Between earning an undergraduate degree in urban planning and starting law school, he worked for the Illinois Secretary of State. While with NACo, he has also been a member of the Defined Contribution and Retirement Advisory Committee, Resilient Counties Advisory Board, NACo Board of Directors, Membership Standing Committee and Large Urban County Caucus.

"It's a place where county officials can get together to get things done," he said. One of Healy's proudest accomplishments is the increased cooperation between counties and freight railroad operators.

"A few decades ago, there was no relationship," he said. "Over the last 10 years, the two sides have gotten incredibly close and work together for their shared benefit. Freight is big in my county," which is due west of Chicago's Cook County.

"If a car is derailed or has a fire, the fire chiefs and disaster response personnel can zoom in with a drone to see that number of the rail car and the cars near it, to see exactly what they'll be dealing with when they try to put it out," Healy said.

That information shows up in a database and smartphone app available to first responders that allows them to look up the contents of rail cars for the purpose of emergency response planning.

"We know what's in the cars around it in case the fire spreads. It's all important information for counties to know because hazardous materials come through on trains all the time.

"It's the culmination of a lot of relationship-building between the industry and NACo that has paid off for counties and shown what we're capable of doing when we work together," Healy noted.

"It's an ability to do something really powerful," he said. "It's not until you're at a Legislative Conference, sitting in those committees and going through

the details that you see how we can affect change like this for all counties. Knowing that work goes somewhere motivates you."

Healy's NACo involvement has helped him on the state level. DuPage County is heavily urbanized, but friendships he made with NACo members helped him get to know rural counties' challenges.

"My family spent four days at (former Commissioner) Jamie Dockett's ranch in Meagher County, Mont. and I learned more in those four days about rural county challenges than I can count," he said. "Her county is five times the size of DuPage, but I have more people living in my subdivision.

"Now when I work with counties in Illinois with 20,000 people, I feel like I understand them a lot better."

Healy also put his stamp on the Transportation Steering Committee. While serving as chairman, he allowed members from the National Association of County Engineers to serve on the committee and he facilitated bonding among committee members. He would encourage them

to show up for conferences a day early for a dinner followed by karaoke singing.

"There are times we took over bars," he said. "We had about 250 people in Kansas City, so many that people had to hang out on the sidewalk. It was wall-to-wall NACo people. Joan Murphy (Murphy, who died in 2016, served on the NACo Transportation Committee and was a Cook County Board member) sang, and she has a beautiful voice, so (former NACo associate legislative director) Bob Fogel and I got up to show people you could do it even if you couldn't sing to save your life."

Had Healy known he was going to start collecting pins, he would have taken those opportunities to get started. In lieu of that, counties may send their pins to:

Jim Healy
835 McClintock Drive,
Burr Ridge, IL 60527

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**Cinda Edwards, Sangamon
County Coroner Passes Away**

In Memoriam

ISACo is saddened to learn of the passing of Sangamon County Coroner Cinda Edwards and her husband, former Springfield Mayor Frank Edwards. The couple and a third individual lost their lives in a small plane crash outside of Springfield on January 28, 2020.

Illinois State Association of Counties
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Counties Count!



County Quarterly Newsletter

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