

STATE OF ILLINOIS
101st GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION
SENATE TRANSCRIPT

3rd Legislative Day

5/22/2020

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PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR CUNNINGHAM)

The First Special Session of the 101st General Assembly will please come to order. In place of the invocation today, I ask all Senators and those watching the proceedings to observe a moment of silence for those lost to the coronavirus. (Moment of silence observed) Please remain standing for the Pledge of Allegiance. Senator Glowiak Hilton.

SENATOR GLOWIAK HILTON:

(Pledge of Allegiance, led by Senator Glowiak Hilton)

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR CUNNINGHAM)

Mr. Secretary, Reading and Approval of the Journal.

SECRETARY ANDERSON:

Senate Journal of May 21st, 2020.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR CUNNINGHAM)

Senator Hunter.

SENATOR HUNTER:

...President, I move to postpone the reading and approval of the Journal just read by the Secretary, pending arrival of the printed transcript.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR CUNNINGHAM)

Senator Hunter moves to approve {sic} the Journals just read by the Secretary. There being no objection, so ordered. The First Special Session of the 101st General -- General Assembly will stand at ease to the call of the Chair. We'll recess to the call of the Chair.

(SENATE STANDS IN RECESS/SENATE RECONVENES)

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

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The First Special Session of the General Assembly -- the Senate, sorry, will come to order. Will the Committee on Assignments please come to the Floor? Would the Committee on Assignments please come to the Senate Floor? Mr. Secretary, Committee Reports.

SECRETARY ANDERSON:

Senator Lightford, Chairperson of the Committee on Assignments, reports the following Legislative Measures have been assigned: Be Approved for Consideration - Floor Amendment 1 to House Bill 190, Motion to Concur with House Amendments 5 and 6 to Senate Bill 1863, and Floor Amendment 3 to House Bill 2238. Signed, Senator Kimberly A. Lightford, Chairperson.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Ladies and Gentlemen, we will be going to Floor action and bills on 3rds. Ladies and Gentlemen, we are on page 2 of the Special Session Calendar. We are going to proceed with House Bill 2238. Sponsorship has been switched to Senator Morrison. Senator Morrison, would you like to proceed on your bill?

SENATOR MORRISON:

Thank you, Madam President. I move to...

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Sorry. I'm sorry. Senator Morrison seeks leave of the Body to return House Bill 2238 to the Order of 2nd Reading. Leave is granted. On the Order of 2nd Reading is House Bill 2238. Mr. Secretary, are there any Floor amendments approved for consideration?

SECRETARY ANDERSON:

Floor Amendment No. 2, offered by Senator Martinez.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

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Senator Martinez.

SENATOR MARTINEZ:

Thank you, Madam President. You look wonderful up there. I withdraw that amendment, for the record. I'm -- yeah, I'm withdrawing Amendment No. 2.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Martinez withdraws Amendment No. 2. Mr. Secretary, are there any other Floor amendments?

SECRETARY ANDERSON:

Floor Amendment No. 3, offered by Senator Morrison.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison, on Floor Amendment No. 3.

SENATOR MORRISON:

Thank you, Madam President. I would like to adopt the amendment and discuss on 3rd Reading, please.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Is there any discussion? All those in favor will say Aye. Opposed, Nay. The Ayes have it, and the amendment is adopted. Are there any other further Floor amendments approved for consideration?

SECRETARY ANDERSON:

No further amendments reported.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

3rd Reading. Mr. Secretary, please read the bill.

SECRETARY ANDERSON:

House Bill 2238.

(Secretary reads title of bill)

3rd Reading of the bill.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

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Senator Morrison, on your bill, please.

SENATOR MORRISON:

Thank you, Madam President. Members of the Senate, this bill is a response to comments that came from the Executive Committee hearing yesterday. I believe that when enacted, House Bill 2238 will make Senate Bill 1863, a good bill, an even better bill. Specifically, it addresses a couple of terms raised in the debate yesterday. It clarifies that election authorities must appoint a panel of judges to review vote by mail ballots. It requires that three of three election judges are required to reject a mail ballot if the signatures do not match or if a voter puts their signature in the wrong location. However, the change is that only two of three judges will be required to reject a ballot if there is no signature on the certification envelope, the envelope was delivered open, the voter has already cast a ballot or voted on election day, or the voter is not duly registered in that precinct. And finally, it clarifies that the ballot drop-off boxes, which are not mandatory but may be put in place by the election authority, shall be secure sites, which has always been the intent of the sponsors and the election authorities. It simply speaks to the intent. Happy to answer any questions, if there are any.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Is there any discussion? Senator Righter, for what purpose do you seek recognition?

SENATOR RIGHTER:

A inquiry of the Chair, if I might first, Madam President.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator.

SENATOR RIGHTER:

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Some procedural inquiries. First, just to make sure I understand and the Members understand how we are positioned here, House Bill 2238, as amended now, is a page-and-line amendment to what would be law if 1863, the underlying vote by mail bill, became law. Is that correct?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Yes. It is a trailer to 1863.

SENATOR RIGHTER:

This bill would - if it is approved in this Chamber - would still need to go over to the House, there would need to be a motion to concur filed, and it would have to be approved by the House before going to the Governor's Office for signature. Is that correct?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

That is correct, Senator.

SENATOR RIGHTER:

Last inquiry on this, Madam President. So, if this bill were either to fail in this Chamber or not be moved in the House and 1863, which is pending in this Chamber now, were to be approved by the Chamber and sent to the Governor's Office, these changes would not apply to the new law. Is that correct?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

That is also correct, Senator.

SENATOR RIGHTER:

I wonder if -- if I can ask the sponsor a few questions, Madam President? Excuse me.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Sponsor yields.

SENATOR RIGHTER:

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Thank you very much, Madam President. Senator Morrison, obviously -- and I listened to the changes in this bill and clearly you've -- you've made some changes that were the subject of the inquiries from Executive Committee yesterday. I want to first say thank you for making those changes. You heard the procedural inquiries I made to the Presiding Officer, so my first question is, have you had any conversations with anyone in the House about whether or not they are going to take up House Bill 2238 if it becomes law? And have you had any conversation with the Governor's Office - I'm sorry, if it -- if it passes here - have you had any conversation with the Governor's Office about whether or not he will sign it into law if it passes the House?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

Senator Righter, you're correct that these are -- this -- these are -- changes are in -- in large part to your comments, which I think do make the bill better. The answer to your question is, the language has been sent to both the Governor's Office and the House. I believe, according to counselor, that they have both accepted the language and Representative Burke, Leader Burke, who is carrying 1863 in the House, has now -- is now carrying this House bill.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Righter.

SENATOR RIGHTER:

Thank you, Madam President. The House sent us 1863 in the form that it was presented yesterday during the subject matter hearing in Executive, so -- but what I hear you saying is that

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somehow the Leaders in the House have been convinced that these changes are the right changes to make and they will do so voluntarily even though they know that if the Senate passes 1863 and they sit on it, they get the bill as they drafted it over in the House. I mean, can you give me a feel for your optimism, because they're kind of in the catbird seat here when it comes to these changes?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

Senator, at this point in the proceedings, I do have faith that the House will take this up, will adopt this bill -- this amendment that we're sending to them. I think we have to have a little trust and faith in our colleagues and -- and I am doing so now.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Righter.

SENATOR RIGHTER:

Thank you, Madam President. Senator Morrison, I clearly have served in the General Assembly for too long. I cannot quite summon the trust and confidence in our House colleagues to change an elections bill to a more reasonable form than that which they sent here, but I -- I appreciate your effort to brighten my day in that regard. I -- I -- it -- it -- it is -- it is unfortunate and some -- this is the way it happens sometimes at what feels like the end of the Session, whether it is or not, that rather than making sure the cake is baked with all the ingredients the way it's supposed to be, we do things piecemeal. I appreciate that Senator Morrison was put in that position by the House. She has tried to accommodate

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us and I hope that she's right. With that, I'll close. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Is there any other discussion? If not, Senator Morrison, do you wish to close?

SENATOR MORRISON:

I would ask for an affirmative vote on this measure, which I believe will make the next bill an even better and stronger piece of legislation.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

The question is, shall House Bill 2238 pass. All those in favor will vote Aye. Opposed, Nay. The voting is open. Have all voted who wish? We will call Members to the Floor for voting in groups of ten. If you -- if -- when we move to the next group of Senators and you have not yet voted, you may still come to the Floor to vote until voting is closed. Senators Anderson, Aquino, Barickman, Belt, Bennett, Bertino-Tarrant, Brady, Bush, Castro, and Crowe, please come to the Floor to vote. Senators Cullerton, Cunningham, Curran, DeWitte, Ellman, Feigenholtz, Fine, Fowler, Gillespie, and Glowiak Hilton, please come to the Floor to vote. In addition, we should have Senators Anderson, Aquino, Barickman, Belt, Bennett, Bertino-Tarrant, Brady, Bush, Castro, and Crowe. Senators Cullerton, Cunningham, Curran, DeWitte, Ellman, Feigenholtz, Fine, Fowler, Gillespie, and Glowiak Hilton, please all come to the Floor to vote. Senators Harris, Hastings, Hunter, Jones, Joyce, Koehler, Landek, Lightford, and Link, please come to the Floor to vote. And Senators Cullerton, Cunningham, Curran, DeWitte, Ellman, Feigenholtz, Fine, Fowler, Gillespie, and Glowiak Hilton, please come to the Floor to vote. Senators Harris,

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Hastings, Hunter, Jones, Joyce, Koehler, Landek, Lightford, and Link. Senators Manar, Martinez, McClure, McConchie, Morrison, Muñoz, Murphy, Oberweis, Peters, and Plummer, please come to the Floor to vote. Senators Rezin, Righter, Rose, Schimpf, Sims, Stadelman, Steans, Stewart, Syverson, and Tracy, please come to the Floor to vote. Senators Manar, Martinez, McClure, McConchie, Morrison, Muñoz, Murphy, Oberweis, Peters, and Plummer, please come to the Floor to vote. Senators Van Pelt, Villanueva, Villivalam, Weaver, Wilcox, and President Harmon, please come to the Floor to vote. Senators Rezin, Righter, Rose, Schimpf, Sims, Stadelman, Steans, Stewart, Syverson, and Tracy. Senators Van Pelt, Villanueva, Villivalam, Weaver, Wilcox, and President Harmon, please come to the Floor to vote. Senators Curran, Feigenholtz, Senator Stadelman, and Senator Weaver, please come to the Floor to vote. Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Take the record. On that question, there are 37 Ayes, 19 Nays, and none voting Present. House Bill 2238, having received the required constitutional majority, is declared passed. Senator Cunningham, for what purpose do you seek recognition?

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM:

Madam President, under 13-4 of the Senate Special Session Rules, the following Members are excused today: Senators Collins, Martwick, and McGuire. Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

The record will so reflect. We're now going to Supplemental Calendar 1, Motions to Concur. Senate Bill 1863. Mr. Secretary, please read the motion.

SECRETARY ANDERSON:

I move to concur with the House in the adoption of their

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Amendments 5 and 6 to Senate Bill 1863.

Signed by Senator Morrison.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Pursuant to Special Session Rules, the Leaders have agreed to three speakers each plus the sponsor. That will be Senator Schimpf, McClure, and Plummer. The Democrats, it will be Senator Villivalam, Senator Manar, and Senator Sims. Senator Morrison, present your motion.

SENATOR MORRISON:

Madam President, I move to concur with the House. Senate Bill 1863 makes various changes for the 2020 general election, an expanded vote by mail program where about 4.8 million Illinois voters will automatically receive a vote by mail application. This bill requires the State Board of Elections to have a vote by mail application on its website where voters can apply regardless of where they live in Illinois. It requires election authorities to expedite mail-in ballots. Any person who requests a ballot by October 1st should receive a ballot not later than October 6th and not later than two business days after that. Establishes a presumption that any vote by mail ballot returned is valid. Requires election authorities to notify the State Board of Election {sic} (Elections) of all ballots received and rejected, and allows political parties and candidates access to those lists. Extends early voting hours at permanent voting sites. Allows counties with a population less than two hundred and fifty thousand to appoint three judges instead of five. Establishes General Election Day, November 3rd, 2020, as a State holiday. And provides that, at the age of sixteen, a qualified person in Illinois may become an election judge. This expansion of early voting is a direct

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response to the COVID-19 pandemic and I ask for the Body's affirmation and concurrence.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Is there any discussion? Senator Schimpf.

SENATOR SCHIMPF:

Thank -- thank you, Madam President. Will the sponsor yield for a few questions?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Indicates she will yield.

SENATOR SCHIMPF:

Thank -- thank you, Senator Morrison, for your willingness to answer a few questions. I know you've been talking a lot about this. You know, I -- I watched the Executive Committee hearing yesterday, so I really do appreciate your indulgence. What I -- what I'd like to try to start by fleshing out is, you said -- you said just a couple minutes ago that this was -- this legislation is in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and yesterday we talked about the Association of County Clerks, that -- that group that had weighed in on this. Is this, though -- is this -- can you explain whether this is their initiative or whether this is an initiative that has been kind of pushed by the Pritzker administration really as one of his priorities since he came into office?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

Senator, the bill in front of you is not a good representation of the legislation I originally intended to be presenting today. It was my original intention to have a ballot mailed to every

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registered voter in the State of Illinois with postage paid and -
- and a return envelope included in the packet that would also
have postage paid. This -- this legislation before you is, as
many bills are that come to us, especially at this point, is a --
is the result of working through concerns and issues and coming to
a mutually agreed-upon lowest common denominator, if you would.
So I don't take this as the work of any one particular body or
elected official.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Schimpf.

SENATOR SCHIMPF:

So -- so then, to clarify, it's -- it's fair to say that this
was the end product of your initial efforts, though. This was not
something that originated with the local election officials coming
to you, coming to the Governor, saying, "We need to do this." This
is something that is a top-down initiative. Is that correct?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

I believe that the clerks had their own set of bills, had
their own initiatives, and I believe Senator Cunningham was the
original sponsor of those -- those measures. So -- I'm -- I'm --
I'm being very -- I'm being very candid in how the bill has
progressed and how we've come to where we are.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Schimpf.

SENATOR SCHIMPF:

Thank -- thank you -- thank you for that. And I recognize
that in this rather unique situation, we don't have the

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availability of hearings, where we could have groups like the County Clerks Association come in and -- and -- and -- and talk. And I just want to -- I want to make sure that we're -- we're clear, though, that this was not something that they pushed for. This was something that they -- they were asked, you know, would they be capable of -- of supporting. But this was -- this was not an initiative from -- from the bottom up. And I also -- so my next -- my next question then is, can -- can you just please clarify for the record exactly what we are trying to -- what we are trying to do here? Are we trying to encourage vote by mail or are we trying to -- to actually implement a -- a vote by mail?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

This legislation is aimed at providing the most access and safety to the general voting public in Illinois. It is specific to this general election, November 2020. That's the intention. It is our responsibility as State government, if we've learned nothing else in the past few months, that it's our responsibility to plan and prepare, and this initiative is simply that. And it does encourage and promotes the use of vote by mail for that purpose - the health and safety of the electors.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Schimpf.

SENATOR SCHIMPF:

Last question, Madam President, and then I'll -- then I'll close. Thank you, again, Senator Morrison, for the indulgence. I would just like to ask why the -- why the emphasis on six -- sixteen-year-olds as election judges? I realize that they are

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currently allowed to have sixteen-year-old election judges by law in some counties. I think a lot of counties say juniors or seniors in high school, although Cook County, interestingly enough, says that they have to be a registered voter, which, you know, that would take -- that would take sixteen-year-olds out of the -- out of the question. But when we're talking about the provisions in the -- in the bill - so this is Section 2B-40, subparagraph (a)(1) {sic} (a) - is the intent of your bill that -- that the local election authorities have to allow sixteen-year-olds, or can they have more restrictive requirements, like, say, that you have to be twenty-one in order to serve as an election judge?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

Would you repeat the Section for me? Because I want to give you a valid response.

SENATOR SCHIMPF:

...talking about subparagraph, I think (a)(1) of Section 2B-40, which is "Judges of election", is what the title is. And the -- the question was, do the -- do the local election boards have the ability to put more stringent requirements, such as requiring that the judges be twenty-one years of old?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

Senator, it says very specifically "may" appoint, and the reason behind this I think is -- is apparent to many of us, if not all of us, that we lost a great number of experienced election judges who are retired and older people who, quite simply, have a

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great deal of hesitation now in performing those election duties that they've enjoyed for so many years. A sixteen-year-old or seventeen-year-old or an eighteen-year-old should be allowed and I think it's an excellent way to engage - as I hope you agree with me - it's an excellent way for us to engage the younger generation in -- in our government. This was an initiative specifically of the House Democratic Women's Caucus.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Schimpf.

SENATOR SCHIMPF:

Thank you, Madam President. To the bill -- or to -- to the motion.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

To the motion.

SENATOR SCHIMPF:

To your last point, Senator Morrison, this is an area I -- I completely understand what you're trying to do with the sixteen-year-old election judges. It makes a lot of sense to me, but I'm going to have to respectfully disagree with you, and this is -- this is why. My oldest boy is not quite sixteen yet. He's approaching that -- that age demographic, and while he understands what the process is, I don't think he has enough experience where he would be able to stand up to the pressure of an adult and a respected figure trying to influence him. I'll give you -- I'll give you a personal example. When I was in high school, I made my money reffing soccer games. And I knew what the rules were, but the very -- the -- my first couple years as a referee, I was not a good referee, because when the coaches or the spectators on the sidelines were yelling at me, I was -- you know, I was -- I was

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able to be swayed by that pressure. So I think when we're looking at these -- these election judges - which you said yesterday during the Executive Committee was the absolute linchpin and the keystone of this - I think it has to be somebody that has the -- the bitter life experience to learn that you're not going to be subject to pressures. And I just respectfully disagree with you that a sixteen-year-old has that ability to withstand pressure from a -- from a trusted -- from a trusted adult. So that's why I'm concerned about the -- the sixteen-year-old piece. You know, as we as Senators get ready to vote on this - you know, it's going to be a long day - I want to tell just a very quick, short story about a mistake that I made, which was back when -- you know, I'm not -- I'm not a boomer, but I'm not a technology guy, and when I got my first smartphone, I wanted -- you know, one of the things that I wanted that smartphone to have on it was a flashlight. So I quickly downloaded an app and had a flashlight on my smartphone. About one year later, when I was having problems, I took the smartphone in to the store and they said, "Why did you download this flashlight app? There already was a flashlight on your smartphone." That's the analogy that we need to think about today, because we already have a very robust system for vote by mail. We have a system that already allows anybody that is concerned about the health challenges or wants to vote by mail for any reason, they have the ability to do so. What we're looking to do today is add a system in that is going to have significant costs. The costs seem to be increasing as the length of the -- the debate goes on. The last I heard was this was going to have a price tag of sixteen million dollars, which that may not be much, but that is real money. And there are -- there are -- I think we all recognize

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that there are opportunities for bad actors to put their thumb on the scale. And lastly, and perhaps most importantly, this is going to be a significant burden on our local election authorities. So my -- my urging to the -- to the -- to my fellow Members is let's take a breath; realize that if we're looking to just making -- make vote by mail an option, we already have that. And I would ask that we -- that we vote No on the motion. Thank you, Madam President. Thank you, Senator Morrison.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison, did you wish to respond? Okay. Let's move on. We have further discussion. Senator McClure, for what purpose do you seek recognition?

SENATOR McCLURE:

Thank you, Madam President. For the purpose of -- will the sponsor yield for a question?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

She indicates she will yield.

SENATOR McCLURE:

Thank you, Senator Morrison, number one, for taking questions. I really have a lot of respect for you and we've worked together very well, so I just can't thank you enough. First question is, Senator, so you say there's an agreement with the Governor and the House to make sure that this additional bill - it's House Bill 2-2-3-8 - they're going to -- the House is going to pass it; the Governor's going to sign it. Is that your understanding?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

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Senator McClure, that is my understanding.

SENATOR McCLURE:

Then why didn't you just gut and replace House Bill 2-2-3-8 and include the language from the original bill, which we're talking about now? Why not put them both together? Since they're going to approve it anyway, why not make it easy so all of us in the Senate know what we're voting on?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

So, Senator, the House had a three-hour debate, very comprehensive discussion, a lot of back and forth. Out of respect for that robust debate and the fact that we are in the last day of our scheduled Session for spring, I took the other option.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator McClure.

SENATOR McCLURE:

Thank you, Madam President. And we had an election with COVID-19 and obviously it took everyone off guard at that time and so a lot of people couldn't vote by mail because they couldn't know in advance as to what was going to happen. So why does that system not work? Because this upcoming election, all of us know that COVID-19 is probably going to still be a very big factor. Why can't they now, knowing that's going to happen, apply to vote by mail, get their application, and do it the way that we've done it in Illinois for years?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

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Senator, this legislation, as I'm sure you've read, has an education component to it, a campaign to advise electors of this new enhancement in voting by mail and also explaining their rights and the process of voting by mail. If we do absolutely nothing today, if we don't pass this bill, there is still going to be a great increase, I believe, in vote by mail. I agree with you on that. What we will not have is a uniform way for election authorities - a hundred and eight of them across this State - to deal with this in a unified and planned-for manner. I'm going to repeat what I said before, which is, it is our responsibility as State government to plan and prepare, and that's -- again, is what this bill does.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator McClure.

SENATOR McCLURE:

Okay, Senator, so the people that are going to be getting applications to vote - I think it's three elections that are in the legislation: the 2018 general election, the 2019 consolidated election, or the 2020 general primary election - how do we know that the people that are going to be mailed these applications are going to still be alive, aren't going to be at a different address, are going to be valid voters?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

So, Senator, as I think you heard me say earlier, my original intention was to have ballots mailed out. This compromise language is simply an application. And when an application is received by the election authority, it will be their responsibility and their

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opportunity to confirm and do their due diligence to make sure this is a person who is in -- who's on the voting list. And in fact, by only going back to 2018, we have a -- a -- I think a fairly good idea of who is living where. And these are local election authorities. This isn't the State Board of Election {sic} (Elections) who is mailing this out, these ballots -- excuse me, these applications or ballots; these are local.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator McClure.

SENATOR McCLURE:

Thank you, Madam President. So, really, the main argument here is that because the applications are so secure and because they have to -- someone has to respond to them and come back, that because of that, we can be sure and positive that anybody that then receives a ballot and mails it in after that or deposits -- deposits it after that is the actual person. Is that basically what you're saying, Senator?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

So, Senator, it is based like the -- it's -- it's basically the system we have before us. As you mentioned in an earlier remark, we already have a vote by mail system.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator -- Senator McClure.

SENATOR McCLURE:

Right, but the people have to request a vote by mail ballot -- vote by mail ballot, excuse me. I need to take a drink of water. This -- this mask is very difficult to talk in and I'm

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getting very sweaty under this thing too, by the way.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

Oh, we'll wait for Senator McClure.

SENATOR McCLURE:

...yourself. Are you good? You okay? Okay.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Wait a minute. Let's -- let's figure out this match here. I think we're back to you, Senator McClure.

SENATOR McCLURE:

Thank you, Madam President. So, as of now, if I want to vote by mail, I have to put the request in for the application, I fill it out and I send it back. So that's how it's done now. Why is it -- so I would -- I would just be curious why you think that needs to change?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

Senator McClure, not everyone as -- is as fluent in Election Code as you probably are and I think there are a lot of people across the State who don't know this is even an opportunity or how to go about it. They don't understand what happens to their ballot once they mail it back in or what those options are. This is an entire program where information will be dispersed to 4.8 million people with that initial application. I think that goes a long ways towards educating people and making them more comfortable in a change of voting behavior.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

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Senator McClure.

SENATOR McCLURE:

Thank you, Madam President. Okay, so the application, so you're -- you seem to be pretty sure that this is going to be secure and it's going to be fantastic, there's going to be nothing that's going to be wrong with it, so let's talk about the application process. So the first -- the first part of this legislation - this is all new; this is not previous election law; this is directly quoting this bill - it says "An election authority shall accept any application selected {sic} (submitted) by an elector...", and it doesn't matter if that is -- that application is prepared by the State Board of Elections, the election authority, any other application submitted in a form substantially similar to that required by Section 19-3, including any substantially similar production or reproduction generated by any source or by the applicant. So a person who's not the applicant, without the applicant's permission, can submit an application that's not even an original document, but a copy, and that must be accepted, according to the language in this bill. Why do you think that's good for elections and election security?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

Senator, there are already criminal penalties in our statute, and I think it's Article 29 of the Election Code, that would speak to someone doing that.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator McClure.

SENATOR McCLURE:

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Now, another way that these applications can be mailed out, says they can be mailed or emailed out. What steps have been taken to ensure that these emails are still properly vetted and they're still going to the right recipient? And where are these email addresses coming from?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

The clerks have a number of email addresses that they collect within their election authority offices that they can use to mail those electronically. Remember that the universe, which you described from the three elections, will be mailed, not by the State Board of Elections, but this is actually being generated by the -- a local election authority. If you would apply to the State Board of Elections, it is the State Board of Elections' responsibility to pass on, within two days, your application to your local election authority.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator McClure.

SENATOR McCLURE:

Thank you, Madam President. And, in fact, not only can these applications be emailed to people, there's no specification in here that says the email address that sends a response to that application and submits an application electronically via email has to even be the same email address that the application was originally sent to. Is that correct?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

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Senator, this is just an application for a ballot. This is not the ballot itself.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator McClure.

SENATOR McCLURE:

We're going to be -- we're going to get into the ballots pretty soon, but, first, this application process is very important, because all of these very, very strange rules that seem to allow for lots of nefarious things to occur are all given with the understanding that the application process is so secure. The point that I'm trying to make, Senator, is, why on earth does it seem so unsecure? And we're going to get to the ballots in a second, though. I just don't understand why someone can email a signed application from a random email address that is not a actual signature. You can take a -- a signature, scan it, paste it on the bottom of this application, email it in from a different email address, and according to this, it has to be -- that application has to be accepted.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

I'm -- I'm not really sure what your fear or your concern is. Again, I'm not sending -- this is not the ballot. This is accepting an application for a ballot that the election authority will then send out. The ballot is not going to be sent electronically. We're not -- just to be clear, we're still talking about a piece of paper that is going to be mailed to a residence, to the address to which that voter is registered.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

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Senator McClure.

SENATOR McCLURE:

Thank you, Madam President. So let's get to the ballots themselves. Currently, if you want to go and submit your absentee ballot, your -- your -- your vote, you can do that in person, if you wish to. You can go to the county clerk's office and you can -- and you can provide that to them. In this -- in this legislation, there's language that says that you can create something different, which is a -- and pardon me for one moment, I'm trying to find the page of the legislation, Senator. Let me see here. Oh, here we go. Thank you. Sorry. I apologize. Thank you very much. So, according to this legislation, there is a secure collection site. What does that mean?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

Senator, this is permissive and an opportunity for each election authority to determine whether or not they would like to have a secure depository for ballots to be dropped off. The -- we just passed an amendment that says that all collection sites shall be secured by locks which may be opened only by election authority personnel and that the State Board of Elections will establish additional guidelines for the security of collection sites. What we've seen other states do is something akin to a mailbox or perhaps you've seen a metal receptacle at a pharmacy or at your police station where you can put unused drugs. That's what the intention is. But we're trying to let each election authority do what works best for their community and they may decide not to have that at all.

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PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator McClure.

SENATOR McCLURE:

So, in the -- number one, there's no guarantee that that second bill which you're citing is going to pass, and obviously, we're talking about this bill. I understand there's an agreement, but I've -- in my young career as a State Senator, I've already seen "agreements", quote/unquote, that never happen once they reach the other house. But just dealing with this bill, and even taking into account what you had written, you know, election law is very clear, as far as when you cast your ballot, the type of a container that the ballot has to go into. Why is that language not in this bill, or -- quite frankly, even in the other bill, particularly language that deals with - and I can actually get you the exact language, 'cause I've got it written down - "an opening in the top of each box not larger than is sufficient to admit a single closed ballot" at a time? That's language that is true for our ballot boxes. Why is that language not reflected in either the additional bill that was just filed today or the -- amendment that was just filed today or the legislation which we're debating right now?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

Gosh, Senator, you had a long question, so I'm going to try to remember -- I want to try to respond to it. Wow! Can you -- can you restate it real -- it -- it -- it -- it is permissive, first of all. It's not required. And when you think about the security, when you -- right now, if you would mail your application

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back to your election authority or even your application -- the ballot or the application, you're either putting it in a mailbox or -- what I do at home and maybe you do too, is I put it on the outside -- I put a clip on the outside of my mailbox and I have my mailman pick it up. Now that maybe isn't the most secure thing in the world. We do that now. That is totally acceptable.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator McClure.

SENATOR McCLURE:

Would you agree, Senator, that there's a big difference between a mailbox, which is protected by federal law, either your personal mailbox or the mailbox that you see. These are uniform, pretty much. They're blue, they're bolted down onto cement, typically, and they say on the side, the "United States Postal Service". Would you agree that there's a big difference between that and any, quote/unquote, "secure collection site"? Which I don't even know what the hell that means. Would you...

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator...

SENATOR McCLURE:

...difference between the federal law that affects that and the fact that we all know what these post office boxes have to look like and there's certain things that you have to have in your personal mailbox at your house?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

Senator, this is done in other states. We're not creating a wheel here. This is done successfully and safely in other states.

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It is permissive and there are already statutory requirements of how a ballot is to be handled. And should somebody tamper with it, there are fairly serious repercussions.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator McClure.

SENATOR McCLURE:

Madam President, thank you. So -- okay, and I apologize for the question before, because it was very long and confusing. But, specifically, why is the language that is in our law as of now for ballot boxes, which says specifically that "an opening in the top of each box not larger than is sufficient to" -- "to admit a single closed ballot" at a time must be on that box - in other words, you can't put a hundred ballots in at once; it's got to be one at a time - why does that -- why should that not be in effect at any secure collection site? And why is that language not in this bill?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

Senator, I want to go back to the word "permissive". For your clerk -- for your county clerk or for your election authority, we're not even mandating this. This is if they choose to do it and to secure it as they know is appropriate and best.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator McClure.

SENATOR McCLURE:

Senator, voter fraud is not a requirement. Voter fraud is also permissive. And -- and if a person wants to commit it, they can find ways to do that. This makes it easier and that's what I'm trying to get at. I'm not saying that this is required. I'm

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saying that in areas where this happens, it makes it easier for voter fraud to occur. So why are the safeguards that are in every other election ballot box not here for this bill? Is it COVID-19 that's caused us not to have -- have these protections to secure our elections?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison, would you like to...

SENATOR MORRISON:

I would simply...

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

...answer the question again?

SENATOR MORRISON:

I would -- I will simply say that if you are not comfortable with the language in this bill and it does become law that you reach out directly to your election authority and advise them of your concerns and fears of tampering.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator McClure.

SENATOR McCLURE:

Thank you, Madam President. Let's get into these judges. No, actually, since we're talking about collection sites and -- and depositing ballots. So as I understand this bill -- and this is just for clarification, Senator. So you have your precincts which you vote at, but on top of that, there also has to be an additional collection site or a voting place where everyone can vote, even from different precincts, is that generally what -- what -- what the bill does?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

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SENATOR MORRISON:

On election day, it creates what you might think of as a super site, one site in that election authority's responsibility where a ballot could be generated for anyone. A lot of times this is already done, Senator, like at the county building on election day, where anyone can walk in and request and vote a ballot. If they reside in that jurisdiction.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator.

SENATOR McCLURE:

...are in place for the centralized voting location where everyone can go and the individual precincts where people can also go so that, in real time, they're communicating to say, "Hey, John Smith just voted at this precinct. So if he comes to this precinct, he can't vote at the centralized location 'cause he's already cast his ballot here." Where in this -- where in this bill does it protect the security of our vote so that that does not happen?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

Senator, this is another opportunity that the election authority has the ability to either put into place or to reject. It is not a mandate. And there would be a record at the end of the election that Steve McClure voted twice on this same day. And one of those ballots, I believe, would be invalidated. And in fact, sir, you would be subject to voter fraud. And we've kind of talked about there are already things in statute that -- that look at that. It's a fairly serious charge.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

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Senator McClure, to the bill, please.

SENATOR McCLURE:

Are you not permitting me -- permitting me to ask any more questions? Senator, what you're saying right now is after a vote has been cast. You can charge a person with voter fraud afterwards, but it's too late at that point. And -- and let me tell you something as a former prosecutor, you have to prove beyond a reasonable doubt. You have to identify the person by face. You have to do an in-person identification for a felony. And a person could very easily go to a different voting location, not be John Smith or not be Steve McClure, say they're Steve McClure at the centralized location. And at the end of the day, once the vote is cast, you're not going to be able to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that that was me or some fraud, 'cause I -- you get -- you get me into court, I'm going to say, "You know, that wasn't me. That was somebody else." There's no way to prove it because there's nothing to show that that person was the one that -- that did it versus me. So, in fact, the damage has already been done and it's an impossible crime to prove in many cases, unfortunately. Couple more? Okay. Okay. I'm going to just ask a couple more questions. And I thank you, Senator, for your indulgence. And I thank the -- Madam President, for allowing me to continue with the questions. I just want to quickly talk about these cases 'cause I -- I know that you had a discussion with -- with Leader Righter on the Floor -- or earlier in the Executive Committee. So we've got these three people that are going to decide whether or not to an -- to accept one of these ballots. And as it stands, the language - and correct me if I'm wrong - even if this other bill passes, the language still says that this committee of three may

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- may - find a ballot is -- find a ballot is not accurate if there's no signature, if it's an open envelope, and other things. So, why is the language in that "may" versus that these things "shall" be taken out if they do not comply with -- with the typical standards that we have for submitting mail-in ballots?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

Senator McClure, this change, as you mention, does now require two out of three, and these election judges are not nefarious people. These are people from your community that have been selected by the election authority to be election judges, who have taken an oath, who are responsible, and who also will be subject to Article 29 criminal penalties in the Election Code should they intentionally violate that oath.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator McClure, did you have any final comments before we move on to Senator Plummer?

SENATOR McCLURE:

I want to speak to the bill, Madam President. Thank...

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Go ahead, Senator.

SENATOR McCLURE:

Thank you, Senator. You know something, everyone -- I think it's fair to say, everyone in this room, every Senator, wants absolutely everyone that can vote, we want them to vote. And, quite frankly, I've -- I've used -- I've -- I've mailed -- I've mailed in my ballot many times and it's -- it's a very good process that we have in place right now. And we live in an area right now

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where - Springfield - we had an alderman race where it was a tie. We had a sheriff's race that was very close to where we're at right now, in Macon County, that was decided by one vote. Every single vote is important and every person must legally and legitimately cast their ballot. While I'm for vote by mail, I don't support vote by fraud. And unfortunately, this is essentially the "Voter Fraud Legalization Act". The typical benchmarks that we need to set and put in place to -- to ensure secure elections, which are under fire right now, even in the last week in the news -- so, in Pennsylvania, we just had an election judge. And, yes, this election judge is charged with crimes, but this election judge for specific candidates in the 2014, 2015, and 2016 primary elections, those ballots are not taken away. Those elections still exist. We just see -- we just saw, today in fact - Senator -- Leader Rezin just brought something to my attention today - where -- in Nevada, one of these stories. This is a case where we've got -- and I'll read from the article right now. "Weeks before the election, live ballots are piling up at apartment complexes. Others are found in the trash." The Review-Journal, from this article, found out that -- they reported that one postal worker has already found thousands of ballots that are "no good", just "sitting in crates with no additional safeguards". You know, ballots were mailed to residents who had either moved out or died. A person reported receiving a ballot from {sic} their deceased mom. The fact of the matter is, is that we have not even secured the -- the voter rolls at this time. And we just came off of a scandal within the Secretary of State's Office, where people that were not entitled to vote voted. But, again, we don't find out until after the election is over with. So regardless of what -- what you're going to do to punish

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a person who does something wrong -- in that case, it's, you know, people that are here, supposed to be here, they're just not supposed to vote. You know, this is a state that has to be one of the, if not the most iconic state for voter fraud in the country - legendary. I mean, how many times have you gone to an event or have I gone to an event where the politician makes the joke "vote early, vote often"? - which is traditionally attributed to one of three famous Illinois residents. This bill codifies that in statute. You can mail a ballot; that same day, go to your precinct and vote; that same day, you can go and you can vote in a centralized location. And who's going to determine if the person submitting the -- the vote by mail is the person they say? Three sixteen-year-olds on a partisan commission, two party versus one party. They decide whether or not this is a valid vote. And they have the leeway to do that because the language is "may" not "shall". Ballots can be cast and collected with no signature, no envelope, at a site that is anything but secure, in bulk, and there's not even the type -- the type of proper security laws in place to protect the right of all of us to vote. This comes at the worst time for the worst reasons and, quite frankly, this is a disgrace. Specifically -- we'd be willing to work with you, and that's the worst part about this. We would be willing to work with you. We could make a good bill that would make all of our constituents proud. That's the worst part about this. But, instead, we have this. So, I guess, after this, "vote early and vote often" won't be a joke anymore, because it'll be codified into our law - and that's not right.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Plummer, for what reason do you seek recognition?

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SENATOR PLUMMER:

Thank you, Madam President. Will the sponsor yield?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

She indicates she will yield.

SENATOR PLUMMER:

Thank you. And I'm sensitive to the time and I'm sensitive to all the work we have to do, so I will try to be fairly concise here. Senator Morrison, I appreciate your effort on this bill. I appreciate your concern about our elections. I appreciate the fact that you're here to talk with us and answer some questions. I've talked to a lot of county chairmen. I've -- I'm sorry, I've talked to a lot of county clerks. I've talked to fourteen county clerks so far. I reached out to a handful of them and a handful have reached out to me. I -- I've yet to talk to a county clerk that supports this legislation. And on top of that, I've been told that there was a phone call late, I guess maybe Wednesday evening or Tuesday evening, and the following morning they were told they had forty-five minutes to email whether or not they supported this. A lot of the county clerks around our State weren't even aware of that. A lot of the county clerks around the State weren't able to read this legislation, and this is going to have a significant impact on our county clerks and their offices. So, I'm just curious, how many county clerks have you talked to in the last seventy-two hours in regards to this legislation, Senator?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

Senator Plummer, I have not personally had the opportunity to speak to a single county clerk in the last seventy-two hours.

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PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Plummer.

SENATOR PLUMMER:

...you. And I know we're all busy right now, but we are essentially rewriting the Election Code and the folks that have to enforce this Election Code, the folks that have to handle these elections are reaching out. They're telling me this is going to add significant expenses to their offices. They're saying that the mandates within the bill, they don't have the staffing or the resources to process these applications or these ballots fast enough. And I know that you referenced to my colleague Senator McClure that if he had concerns, he could take them up with the county clerks, that they maybe didn't have to do all of these things. But, in fact, does this legislation not give the State of Illinois the ability to penalize county clerks and take money away from county clerks if they don't follow it?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

Senator, to your point about the county clerks, I -- I think it's -- everyone is aware that I am the sponsor of this bill. I have had not a single call coming from any of them reaching out to me expressing concerns. And I would hope that that would have happened had there been that. It's the Association of Clerks that filed in support, as well as a whole -- an entire host of stakeholders that regularly work in election law and -- and care about elderly. AARP -- I mean, I can read the list to you. But no one reached out to me.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

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Senator Plummer.

SENATOR PLUMMER:

Well, I can appreciate that. And just to -- to show how hard I work to communicate with people in my district and around the State, I -- I just received a text message not ten minutes ago from one of my county clerks because you said in regards to the emailed -- or emailed applications that the county clerks could utilize some sort of universe or some sort of database of emails that they collect and have to help ensure the integrity of those communications and to send out the -- the ballots or the applications. One of my county clerks just emailed me and said, "I have no idea what they're talking about. I don't know any county clerks that keep email addresses on file." So, again, if you could communicate back to me on -- on your thoughts on the email address. And then, secondarily, does this bill not allow the State of Illinois to financially penalize local units of government if they do not follow it item by item?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

...Plummer, can you tell me where in the -- in the bill -- in the legislation you see a penalty for election authorities coming from the State?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Plummer.

SENATOR PLUMMER:

Out of the sake of time, I will do that in one second, as soon as we pull it up, and I'll move on to my next question so I don't delay things. It was said yesterday that the panels that

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have the -- the three-judge panels that have the ability to oversee some of these decisions were bipartisan panels, and I'll ignore for -- the fact that those bipartisan panels could be two Republicans and one Libertarian or one Conservative, potentially, or two Democrats and one Green Party candidate -- or judge, potentially. Let's ignore that for a second. So, while the -- the panels themselves might be bipartisan, the decisions are often going to be partisan decisions, correct?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

These are the neighbors that also look at your ballot and your -- and hand you your ballot at your polling place. These are just election judges, so I -- but they do have a partisan affiliation - you're right.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Plummer.

SENATOR PLUMMER:

Thank you. So how do we identify the partisan affiliation of a sixteen-year-old kid?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

Senator, I'm assuming that a sixteen-year-old who's not eligible yet to vote and declare a party would be given that opportunity to do so. This...

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Plummer.

SENATOR MORRISON:

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This again -- this is coming from the county chair, though, remember? These -- a list is submitted to the election authority by the county -- by those -- that partisan chairman.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Plummer.

SENATOR PLUMMER:

That -- that -- that is an advisory function. The county clerk doesn't actually have to honor those submitted lists from the county chairman, so that's just an advisory function. And I -- I hear a lot of talk about "assuming" and, you know, "I think", and that -- I just think that the integrity of our elections should be based on something more than assumptions. And there's a lot of assumptions in this bill and that concerns me. So I was going to ask a bunch of questions, but out of respect for time, I want to summarize several of my questions in one question, and that would be, under this bill, is it not theoretically possible that a ballot -- a -- a vote can be successfully cast without a signature, a vote can be successfully cast if the signatures don't match, a vote can be successfully cast if the voter envelope has already been opened and potentially tampered with, and theoretically, John Smith, who my colleague Steve McClure referenced earlier, could submit a mail-in ballot and vote in person, and unless this three-judge panel rejects it, he could get two votes, correct? Theoretically, these things could happen under this bill, right?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

Theoretically. Many of these fixes are taken care of in the House bill that we passed. And let's talk about one of the most

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important elements, since I know you're getting ready to wrap up your comments and questions, which is the signature portion. I want you to think about a neighbor that lives on your block that's lived in their house thirty or forty years. They registered to vote. They may not have submitted a new signature. Tell me that that signature looks exactly like it did when they registered forty years ago when they moved into that home. The signature is a very, very important piece of the application. We are trying to make sure that we are not disenfranchising people. And that is -- that's one of the tenets of this legislation. We want to make sure that everyone has the opportunity, and I know you share my concern with making sure that -- that every possible opportunity to vote is extended to people so they have that constitutional right.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Plummer.

SENATOR PLUMMER:

I -- I appreciate your concern. I think we all want as many people possible to vote. My concern, though, is this bill allows legal votes and legal voters to be disenfranchised when their votes are -- are -- are x-ed out by fraudulent votes. But let me ask the last question, because I -- I may have missed it, but I don't think you answered it. Under this bill, a ballot with no signature, a ballot with a -- mismatching signature, a ballot that has been opened or tampered with, could all count and theoretically a person could get two votes. Is -- is -- yes or no, that is possible under this bill?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

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SENATOR MORRISON:

I -- I think I did answer that. Yes, theoretically, and that's why the amendment to this language, which is House Bill - whatever we just passed - 2238, is in the House awaiting their action to make this bill even better and more secure.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Plummer, are you ready to move on to the bill?

SENATOR PLUMMER:

I'm getting there, Madam President. I appreciate it. I -- I didn't realize we would be stuck on this particular question for so long, 'cause I am almost done. But what we just sent over to the House does not clarify any of the scenarios I just presented to you. And as my colleagues have highlighted, that -- that is an assumption that that will follow this bill to the Governor's Office. So, again, under this bill, if the Illinois State Senate passes it, can ballots with no signature, can ballots with mismatching signatures, can those count, and can people vote twice?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

I've tried to respond and answer that and I think we are just at a place where we disagree. I'm sorry.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Plummer.

SENATOR PLUMMER:

Thank you. Senator Morrison, back to the question you asked of me earlier, page 2, it looks like lines 11 through 18, is where the State of Illinois can penalize our local units of government if they don't follow this legislation. If you could look at that,

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please. Thank you. Of Amendment 6.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

I need just a second, please, to find it. Hang on. Senator, I -- I believe you're -- if I'm looking at the right amendment, that you're referencing the reimbursement opportunities for an election authority from the State Board of Election {sic}, which is some of the COVID-19 money that's come down into the State to provide for some election security and respond to COVID-19. And -- I mean, there are strings attached by Washington on this money. This can't be -- there -- there are specific requirements on this. I mean, otherwise, if we don't spend it in the right way, Senator, we'll have to return those dollars.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Plummer.

SENATOR PLUMMER:

Thank you, Madam President. I believe I have one more question, then I'll -- I'll -- I'll go to the bill. To follow up that comment, I just want to read for the Body. What -- what it actually says is, "Each election authority shall comply with the requirements of this amendatory Act of the 101st General Assembly. The State Board of Elections may withhold any reimbursements for election related costs if an election authority is found to have failed to comply with the provisions of this amendatory Act...". So we were just told that if we thought there were problems with this, we could talk to our local election authority and they could do what's best, but in fact, if they do that, they can be penalized financially by the State. And -- and, yes, there are federal rules

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attached to that money, but this isn't a federal rule; this is a State of Illinois string that is being attached to it. But we'll -- we'll move on from that issue. My final -- my final question -- okay. Okay.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

Why would you not allow a local election authority or discourage a local election authority from sending out an application to a list -- to a universe that they know are active voters when all the other neighboring election authorities are doing this? Why would you penalize your own people when you know you're going to be reimbursed for those costs? You don't have to respond to that. That's just a -- that's my response.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Plummer.

SENATOR PLUMMER:

...appreciate that. Nobody would do that. I was just clarifying the contradiction that was stated earlier. My final question would be, the universe that these applications are being sent to is based on, my understanding is - please correct me if I'm wrong - the 2018, 2019, and 2020 elections. Obviously, there are various voting patterns that occur throughout history and municipal elections and Presidential elections and gubernatorial elections all have different turnout patterns. Before we completely rewrote the Election Code and -- and instituted this program, did we take the time at all to see potentially if any certain geographic areas of the State or certain demographics of our population would be discriminated against or disenfranchised

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by how the universe of voters was selected?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

Senator, I -- I hope you heard what I said, that my original intention was to send a ballot to every registered voter. And because of financial constraints and concerns about the integrity of that list, that's why we have evolved to where we are today, where we are sending an application to a very specific universe that is discerned by and that data shared with the State Board of Elections by the local election authority.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Plummer.

SENATOR PLUMMER:

And -- and I appreciate that and I'm -- I'm very appreciative of the fact that you scaled down your -- your original proposal. But, again, my question was pretty simple. Did we do anything to study at all if various elements of the voting universe in the State of Illinois would be disenfranchised by how we selected this universe? There are various voting patterns out there. I just -- is there a study out there? I don't know if there is. If there is, I would just like to see it. If not, no, and we'll move on.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

No, not that I'm aware of, but I would tell you that anyone that is concerned that they've been disenfranchised by not being included on this list has the same opportunity to still apply for a ballot by mail as they do -- as they did last year and as they

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will going into the future.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Plummer.

SENATOR PLUMMER:

Thank you, Madam President. To the bill. First off, I -- I would like to thank Senator Morrison for taking all the time to answer questions and also all the time she put into this. I appreciate the amendments that were made after the very civil conversation we had yesterday. My -- my concern is pretty simple. I don't know if various Members of this Body have served as county clerks, served as precinct committeemen, served as county chairmen. I've served in some of those roles and I've seen election fraud up close and personal. There are problems in the State of Illinois with election fraud. We want everybody possible to vote. We want it to be as easy as possible for legal voters to vote. What we don't want in the State of Illinois is a piece of legislation, drafted very quickly, that probably hasn't been thoroughly reviewed, that's passed in the middle of a crisis, that opens the door for election fraud across the State of Illinois. There's comments that have been made that just are not factually correct. Our local units of government can be financially penalized if they don't follow this. Our county clerks do not have these email databases. We don't know who's going to make up these three-judge panels. Yes, they're going to be local folks, but I don't know any sixteen-year-old kid that knows his partisan affiliation and I don't know how we confirm that. And the fact of the matter is, I appreciate the work that was put into this bill, but what this bill does is it provides an avenue for ballots to be cast with no signature. It provides an avenue for people to be

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able to vote in an election in the State of Illinois multiple times. There's very little oversight and this opens the door to rampant corruption, a thing that our State is sadly well known for. And I think we should be focused on making sure people can vote in a secure manner so that we have great elections. I don't think we should be opening the door to fraud and that's what this bill does. Madam President, thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Manar, for what purpose do you seek recognition?

SENATOR MANAR:

Would the sponsor yield for a couple of questions, please?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Sponsor indicates she will.

SENATOR MANAR:

Thank you, Madam President. Senator Morrison, thank you for your work on this bill. We discussed it multiple times over the past few weeks and I appreciate you bringing this to a debate in front of the Senate. A couple of questions from county clerks that I represent that support this legislation. First of all, in regards to the single location for voting on election day, is that permissive or required of counties?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

Senator Manar, it is permissive, and I believe it already happens in some counties.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Manar.

SENATOR MANAR:

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Thank you. Question number two: How do you envision the State's responsibility in terms of the associated cost with what this bill sets into motion for vote by mail?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

Senator Manar, I envision the State Board of Elections having the authority to disburse and reimburse local election authorities who apply for those funds. These would be COVID-19 funds that have filtered into the State specifically for this election.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Manar.

SENATOR MANAR:

This is a -- my last question and then I'll make a few remarks to the bill. This is a general question, though, but I think it's been lost in this debate thus far. But, why are we doing this? What is the purpose -- what is the purpose of vote by mail and why is this bill before us at this moment while we are all wearing face masks?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

Senator Manar, thank you for the question. I think maybe it seems obvious to us, but it might be good to -- to say out loud that it is a -- a direct response to the pandemic that we are experiencing now. We have various projections as to what our State will be going through in October and November. This is a -- simply a preparation and a planning to allow for the most voters and electors in the State of Illinois to participate in a very

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important aspect of their citizenry, which is the right to vote.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Manar.

SENATOR MANAR:

To the bill, Madam President.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

To the bill.

SENATOR MANAR:

Thank you. I appreciate the debate and I've been listening intently. I feel compelled to make a few comments in rebuttal to the previous two speakers. First of all, I think if -- if we devote our time talking about supposed voter fraud during the debate of this bill, we're missing the point of this bill. Let me tell you what's a fraud. I'll tell you what's a fraud is that people that I represent and people that you represent couldn't vote in the primary because they felt like they would be exposed to a disease. Let me say it one more time. People that I represent that are United States citizens that are registered voters, that have conditions that are medical, associated with their health, didn't vote because they were afraid of contracting a disease. And that's a real thing. You can make comments about Walmart all you want. Maybe those people don't go to Walmart, maybe they have their groceries delivered. But when someone has to choose between health and a disease, that's a problem. This bill does not mail a ballot to every voter. There are states that do that. There are red states that do that today in the United States of America. This bill doesn't do that. This bill puts in place a more uniform system for our hundred and seven -- hundred and eight election jurisdictions in Illinois. Number two, between 2010 and 2018 in

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the State of Georgia, 1.4 million voters were purged from the election rolls. Credible studies show that eighty-three thousand American citizens were denied the right to vote because their registration information was purged by the government - by the government. That's a problem. And if we aren't doing things like this bill prescribes, then we would be doing things like I just described that's happening in Georgia. If someone is denied the right to vote because of a disease, because of a disease, the fear of contracting disease, that is equally as troubling to me as the government denying someone the right to vote because their name was purged unnecessarily from the voter rolls. That's what this bill is all about. It's pretty simple. This isn't complicated. We have good laws in place today. Nobody has argued against vote by mail that exists today in the Election Code. This bill doesn't change that. All that it changes is it facilitates more of it in the face of a pandemic. That's what this bill does. We should all be for more people voting regardless of who they vote for. I'm for that. I -- I rise in support of this bill. I appreciate the work of the sponsor and the many people that have lended their voices to this bill, because there's many different forms of this that are pending before the Legislature right now. But this is a very - I would argue - narrow approach to vote by mail. This is narrow. This is not mailing everyone a ballot. It's nowhere close to that. There would be people - I would be one of them - that would make the argument we should do that. This bill doesn't do that. But this bill does take appropriate steps to kind of rightsize our system in the face of a health crisis so that constituents that are United States citizens that we represent, the people that we represent, God forbid, in November, don't have

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to make a choice between their health and their ability to leave their fingerprints on democracy. That's what we're doing with this bill. And I would urge an Aye vote.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Villivalam, for what purpose do you seek recognition?

SENATOR VILLIVALAM:

Thank you, Madam President. To the motion.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

To the motion.

SENATOR VILLIVALAM:

Well, first, I'd like to thank the sponsor for bringing this legislation forward and -- and answering whatever was said today from the other side of the aisle. I'd like to reiterate a few points. Number one, this is a pilot program. We will have the ability to assess how this works. Number two, this is not a completely new concept. We have an existing vote by mail program. Early voting already exists. There are residents in Illinois who are provided a few hours to vote on election day. And quite frankly, there are other states, as other speakers have alluded to, that have moved on this issue and have gone much further. The states of Colorado, Hawaii, Oregon, Washington, and Utah - let me say that again, Utah - have voted entirely by vote by mail before the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the COVID-19 pandemic started, states like Michigan have -- have said that they will send a absentee ballot -- application to all registered voters in their state. California recently passed a bill that ordered ballots, actual ballots, to be sent to all registered voters. This is a very measured, well-balanced piece of legislation. We absolutely want to make sure there is no voter fraud. There are processes in place

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to address this. But let me just address the last piece of this. This will ensure the safety of our seniors, our kids, and our families. Traditionally, voting locations have included schools, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, park districts, and so many other locations. I had a situation in my district where a senior building was a polling location, had a hundred and eight seniors. Four days before the election, they decided they didn't want to be a polling location anymore, due to the -- due to the concerns of people coming in to the senior building. So they moved it to a school that was six blocks away. What -- what happened was, the hundred and eight seniors, there was no mechanism for them to vote because they were all expecting to come downstairs that day and cast their ballot. So when we talk about disenfranchisement, that is -- that is what we're trying to combat with this legislation. And I applaud the sponsor for bringing this forward. If you believe in the science behind COVID-19 and what the public health experts have outlined and you believe people should be able to safely exercise their constitutional right to vote, I would say you would vote Yes. Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Sims, for what purpose do you seek recognition?

SENATOR SIMS:

To the motion, Madam President.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Sims.

SENATOR SIMS:

Thank you, Madam President. First, let me thank Senator Morrison for bringing this piece of legislation forward and recognizing that we are dealing in different times. This is -- so

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a few -- a few questions of the sponsor.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR SIMS:

Does this change apply to any other election besides the 2020 general election, right now?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

No, it does not. It is only for the general election on November 3rd, 2020.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Sims.

SENATOR SIMS:

Senator Morrison, there were some contentions made relative to the process by with -- which an individual's ballot could be checked. So -- so if there was a person who cast a vote by mail ballot and then a ballot in person, there were contentions that that person could not -- that those could not be proven or trued up -- trued up. It there a true-up process under current election law for vote by mail?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison.

SENATOR MORRISON:

There is currently a process.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Sims.

SENATOR SIMS:

To the bill, Madam -- Madam President.

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PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

To the bill.

SENATOR SIMS:

I have sat and I have listened to this debate intently. I have sat and listened to the contentions made that there is or will be rampant fraud. There is no evidence that there is fraud happening in our current vote by mail process. What we are talking about is ensuring that individuals, American citizens who are fully enfranchised, have the right to exercise their right to vote. We are not talking about giving individuals the ability to commit rampant fraud. And let's for a moment discuss the contention that fraud is rampant. Instance and case after case has been deproven {sic} and debunked that fraud is rampant in our election system. So what are you afraid of? Why not allow individuals the right to exercise their right to vote? We are -- Senator Morrison's legislation is a -- it's a reasonable proposal that is an extension of current law that allows individuals in the face of a pandemic to allow themselves to be protected. If this were not a reasonable proposal, the federal government would not have included the Help America Vote Act into the -- into the CARES Act, because we -- they understood -- Congress understood that this election is a very different reality. We are dealing with a pandemic unlike anything we have seen in -- since -- since -- since the early part of the 20th century. So this proposal allows the State of Illinois to act reasonably to protect its citizens. It is not a bill that is aimed at allowing or encouraging fraud in any way. You know, I -- I was -- as I listened to the debate, I -- I -- I -- I wanted to go back, 'cause I heard this quote from the bastion of progressism {sic}, Chris Wallace from FOX News, who said, "there

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really is no record of massive fraud or even serious fraud from mail-in voting." "It's being carried out in Republican states, it's being carried out in Democratic states, but {sic} there's no indication that mail-in voting as opposed to in-person voting tends to favor one party over another." What are we afraid of? If we are -- we -- if we encourage our citizens to vote, we are encouraging them to participate and exercise their most basic civic responsibility. What are we afraid of? This is a measured legislation in response to the current pandemic. Thank you, Senator Morrison, for stepping up, bringing this forward. And I -- I urge an Aye vote. Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Morrison, would you like to close?

SENATOR MORRISON:

Thank you, Madam President. And I'd like to begin by thanking my colleagues in the House who worked with us to develop this legislation over the past few weeks, but especially I want to thank the members of the Executive Committee yesterday who participated, who brought to light several important issues that I think have helped today produce a stronger, better piece of legislation, and I want to thank you for your thoughtful comments and remarks yesterday. This is a pilot program. This will begin and end with this election cycle. To the sixteen-year-old, I -- I -- I can't -- I can't let the debate fall away to the side without making a remark about the sixteen-year-olds. The sixteen-year-olds I know are very tech savvy. They live online. They live with technology. And some of our election judges who are retired persons struggle with that. These sixteen-year-olds will not only be trained the same or more specifications, they are also the next generation who

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are engaged in our election process. I think this is a tremendously important addition. And one of my colleagues did mention that when they were a referee they felt -- a little intimidated by speaking up even though they knew the rules. I would -- I would say that the sixteen-year-old election judge is not standing on a baseball diamond alone. He is working with a team of election judges even if he does feel somewhat intimidated, and I doubt he would be. While we were debating this bill over the last several minutes, the Clerks Association did communicate electronically to share the information that some of them do in fact collect email addresses. They do that when you request a ballot, or if you would like to leave your email address when you register to vote, that's another way they do it. Everyone has been extraordinarily patient listening to the debate. I'm grateful to everyone who participated and who gave such thoughtful remarks. I would like to close with the statement that many have given their lives to secure the right to vote and no one else should have to jeopardize their health to exercise it. I would ask for an Aye vote.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

The question is, shall the Senate concur in House Amendments 5 and 6 to Senate Bill 1863. All those in favor will vote Aye. Opposed, Nay. The voting is open. Have all voted who wish? We are now going to call Members to the Floor for voting in groups of ten. If we move on to the next group of Senators, you have not yet voted, you may still come to the Floor to vote until voting is closed. Senators Anderson, Aquino, Barickman, Belt, Bennett, Bertino-Tarrant, Brady, Bush, Castro, and Crowe, please come to the Floor to vote. Senators Cullerton, Cunningham, Curran,

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DeWitte, Ellman, Feigenholtz, Fine, Fowler, Gillespie, and Glowiak Hilton, please come to the Floor to vote. The -- Senators Anderson, Aquino, Barickman, Belt, Bennett, Bertino-Tarrant, Brady, Bush, Castro, and Crowe. Senators Cullerton, Cunningham, Curran, DeWitte, Ellman, Feigenholtz, Fine, Fowler, Gillespie, and Glowiak Hilton, please come to the Floor. Senators Harris, Hastings, Hunter, Jones, Joyce, Koehler, Landek, Lightford, and Link, please come to the Floor to vote. Senators Cullerton, Cunningham, Curran, DeWitte, Ellman, Feigenholtz, Fine, Fowler, Gillespie, and Glowiak Hilton. Senators Harris, Hastings, Hunter, Jones, Joyce, Koehler, Landek, Lightford, and Link. Senators Manar, Martinez, McClure, McConchie, Morrison, Muñoz, Murphy, Oberweis, Peters, and Plummer, please come to the Floor to vote. Senators Rezin, Righter, Rose, Schimpf, Sims, Stadelman, Steans, Stewart, Syverson, and Tracy. Manar, Martinez, McClure, McConchie, Morrison, Muñoz, Murphy, Oberweis, Peters, Plummer. Senators Rezin, Righter, Rose, Schimpf, Sims, Stadelman, Steans, Stewart, Syverson, and Tracy. Senators Van Pelt, Villanueva, Villivalam, Weaver, Wilcox, and President Harmon, please come to the Floor to vote. Senator Feigenholtz, Senator Stadelman, Senator Landek. Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Take the record. On that question, there are 37 Yeas, 19 Nays, and -- and 0 voting Present. The Senate concurs with Amendments 5 and 6 to Senate Bill 1863, and the bill is declared passed. Mr. Secretary, Messages from the House.

SECRETARY ANDERSON:

A Message from the House by Mr. Hollman, Clerk.

Mr. President - I am directed to inform the Senate that the House of Representatives has concurred with the Senate in the

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passage of a bill of the following title, to wit:

Senate Bill 1569.

Together with the following amendments which are attached, in the adoption of which I -- in the adoption of which I am instructed to ask the concurrence of the Senate, to wit:

House Amendments 1, 3, 4, and 5 to Senate Bill 1569.

Passed the House, as amended, May 22nd, 2020. John W. Hollman, Clerk of the House.

We have received like Message on Senate Bill 1937, with House Amendments 1, 2, and 3. Passed the House, as amended, May 22nd, 2020. John W. Hollman, Clerk of the House.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Will the Committee on Assignments please come to the Senate Floor? The Committee on Assignments, please come to the Senate Floor. Can I have everybody kind of quiet down the conversations? It's getting a little noisy for them to meet in Assignments. Mr. Secretary, Committee Reports.

SECRETARY ANDERSON:

Senator Lightford, Chairperson of the Committee on Assignments, reports the following Legislative Measures have been assigned: Be Approved for Consideration - Motion to Concur with House Amendments... Excuse me, Motion to Concur with House Amendments 1 through 3 to Senate Bill 1937.

Signed by Senator Kimberly Lightford, Chairperson.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Supplemental Calendar No. 2 has been printed and distributed. We have a motion to concur on Senate Bill 1937. Senator Lightford.

SENATOR LIGHTFORD:

Thank you, Madam President.

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PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Mr. -- Mr. Secretary, please read the motion.

SECRETARY ANDERSON:

I move to concur with the House in the adoption of their Amendments 1, 2, and 3 to Senate Bill 1937.

Filed by Senator Lightford.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Lightford, to explain your motion.

SENATOR LIGHTFORD:

Thank you, Madam President. The motion {sic} amends the School Code to exempt the debt limit of seven school districts. And I'd be happy to answer further questions if needed.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Is there any discussion? Seeing none, Senator Lightford, do you wish to close?

SENATOR LIGHTFORD:

Ask for an Aye vote. Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

The question is, shall the Senate concur in House Amendments 1, 2, and 3 to Senate Bill 1937. All those in favor will vote Aye. Opposed, Nay. The voting is open. Have all voted who wish? We're going to continue with calling Members to the Floor for voting in groups of ten as we've been doing. If we move to the next group of Senators, you have not yet voted, you may still come to the Floor to vote until the voting is closed. Starting with Senators Anderson, Aquino, Barickman, Belt, Bennett, Bertino-Tarrant, Brady, Bush, Castro, and Crowe, please come to the Floor to vote. Senators Cullerton, Cunningham, Curran, DeWitte, Ellman, Feigenholtz, Fine, Fowler, Gillespie, and Glowiak Hilton, please

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come to the Floor to vote. That's Senators Anderson, Aquino, Barickman, Belt, Bennett, Bertino-Tarrant, Brady, Bush, Castro, and Crowe. Senators Cullerton, Cunningham, Curran, DeWitte, Ellman, Feigenholtz, Fine, Fowler, Gillespie, and Glowiak Hilton, please come to the Floor to vote. Senators Harris, Hastings, Hunter, Jones, Joyce, Koehler, Landek, Lightford, and Link, please come to the Floor to vote. Senators Cullerton, Cunningham, Curran, DeWitte, Ellman, Feigenholtz, Fine, Fowler, Gillespie, and Glowiak Hilton. Harris, Hastings, Hunter, Jones, Joyce, Koehler, Landek, Lightford, and Link. Senators Manar, Martinez, McClure, McConchie, Morrison, Muñoz, Murphy, Oberweis, Peters, and Plummer, please come to the Floor to vote. Senators Rezin, Righter, Rose, Schimpf, Sims, Stadelman, Steans, Stewart, Syverson, and Tracy. Senators Van Pelt, Villanueva, Villivalam, Weaver, Wilcox, and President Harmon, please come to the Floor to vote. Senators DeWitte, Ellman, Joyce, Landek, McClure, Plummer, Senator Rezin, Senator Stewart, Senator Tracy, Van Pelt, and Wilcox. Senator DeWitte, Senator Landek, Senator Plummer, Rezin, Stewart, Tracy, Van Pelt, and Wilcox, please come to the Floor to vote. One last call for Senators Plummer, Rezin, Stewart, Tracy, Van Pelt, and Wilcox. Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Take the record. On the question, there are 50 Yeas, 0 Nay, 0 voting Present. Having received the required constitutional majority, the Senate does concur in House Amendments 1, 2, and 3 to Senate Bill 1937, and the bill is declared passed. Would the Committee on Assignments please come to the Floor? Committee on Assignments, please come to the Floor. Mr. Secretary, Committee Reports.

SECRETARY ANDERSON:

Senator Lightford, Chairperson of the Committee on

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Assignments, reports the following Legislative Measures have been assigned: Be Approved for Consideration - Motion to Concur with House Amendments 1, 3, 4, and 5 to Senate Bill 1569.

Signed, Senator -- Senator Kimberly A. Lightford, Chairperson.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Supplemental Calendar No. 3 has been printed and distributed. We have a motion to concur with House Amendments to Senate Bill 1569. Senator Bertino-Tarrant, do you wish to proceed? Mr. Secretary, please read the motion.

SECRETARY ANDERSON:

I move to concur with the House in the adoption of their Amendments 1, 3, 4, and 5 to Senate Bill 1569.

Filed by Senator Bertino-Tarrant.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator, would you like to...

SENATOR BERTINO-TARRANT:

Now I am. Now I am. Thank you. Thank you, Madam President. Do I have to move a motion or are we just okay to proceed? Like to make a motion to adopt. Thank you. Just -- I can explain it? Great. Wonderful. Thank you, Madam President and Members of the Chamber. This is our education package. This just came over from the House. It passed a 114 to 1. It includes for P through 12 the ISBE's COVID-19 relief package, cleanup language for property tax relief grants, cleanup language to educator misconduct. It extends the sunset, allowing retired teachers to substitute up to a hundred and twenty days. Extends the sunset for interfund transfers. Extends the educator license renewals for one year. Makes the changes to the alternative education {sic} (educator) license program. It pauses teacher evaluations for the '20-'21

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school year. Makes changes to special education and response to intervention provisions. It allows CPS local school council elections to take place at the first report card pickup of the '20-'21 school year. It allows district intervention money to be added to a school district's base funding minimum. In regards to higher education, it is an income change for AIM HIGH and it addresses the Illinois Articulation Initiatives {sic} (Initiative). I'm happy to answer any questions.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Is there any discussion? Senator Weaver, for what purpose do you rise?

SENATOR WEAVER:

...bill, Madam President.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Go ahead, Senator.

SENATOR WEAVER:

Yeah, great. Thank you. There's a lot of great stuff in this bill and we -- we know it's going to pass, but something I just wanted to stand up and speak about. We really worked hard on evidence-based funding model and that's something that we take very seriously. We want to be sure that if we're going to make any changes to that, there's great conversation about it. There's a Professional Review Panel that should be managing anything anytime there's going to be any changes. And there's one particular change in this bill that concerns us regarding district intervention when there's a takeover by -- ISBE actually takes over a school district. I'm going to be requesting some No votes on this, and my point is, this could have been handled sooner, could have gone through the Professional Review Panel, could have

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been discussed. I don't believe it was even discussed in any of the task forces. We don't believe it's really tied to any kind of COVID emergency. So we just want, on this side, be certain people understand we see the evidence-based model as being something sacred, something we don't want to touch, and something that if we are going to make any changes, goes through a long thought-out process. So I'm going to be requesting some No votes and -- but thank you for your work on it, Senator.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Leader Brady, for what purpose do you seek recognition?

SENATOR BRADY:

Thank you, Madam President. I've -- I want to say, first of all, thank you to all the working groups - this one as well - for the hard work that everyone put in to trying to bring a resolution in a bipartisan way to so many issues. And I think this working group did that job. Unfortunately, and it happens all too often, something happened over in the House of Representatives that worked to the special interests of two school districts at the expense of every other school district in this State. And that's unfortunate. That's unfortunate. I suspect this will pass. I have a great deal of respect for the sponsor and -- but I think it's unfortunate that the House did that and I intend to join Senator Weaver in opposing this legislation for that reason, but do appreciate what the working group did in ninety-nine percent of the rest of this piece of legislation.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Bennett, for what purpose do you seek recognition?

SENATOR BENNETT:

To the bill, Madam President.

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PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

To the bill.

SENATOR BENNETT:

Well, obviously, Senator Bertino-Tarrant, as the Chair of Education, I think can speak very well on the K to 12 issues and I know she's been very valuable in the working group. Since Chairman McGuire of Higher Ed is not here today and I have the honor of representing the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, I just wanted to speak briefly on the higher education components of the bill. Two things that come out of this, and both of these I think were byproducts, frankly, of the bipartisan, bicameral Higher Education Working Group that -- that we've been working on now for several years: One has to do with the AIM HIGH program, which has to be one of the highlights of the General Assembly in the last few years, in that it's trying to recognize our highest-achieving students, keep 'em here in Illinois, and ultimately, hope that they'll continue to -- to live in Illinois after graduation when they're on to -- to great things. What the AIM HIGH program change does is it affects the income eligibility so that it provides that the income of a student when they're entering the program would be deemed to be their income of that student for the life of the pilot program. Right now, they have to reapply every single year and that is one extra step for the families and the students that, frankly, other state universities I'm sure -- sorry, the universities of other states that offer similar financial aid are not doing. Second, there's an Illinois Articulation Initiative and what that does -- and we need to remember a lot of students who began this semester under normal circumstances, just like everyone else in this State and country,

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had to face grave changes when COVID came to the United States. And so universities tried to respond by allowing students to change their -- the classification for those -- for those education courses, at least in General -- Gen Ed, from a graded course to a "pass", "credit", "satisfactory" system. What this does - because the law right now has a little bit of ambiguity - under this change, it would mean that those classes, if they did because of hardship at home or the changing circumstances - remember they're leaving campus and now heading home where they may or may not even have Wi-Fi or -- or computer access - now those classes should be transferred to wherever they end up next year. So, again, we're just trying to recognize, for those students that are -- have been and -- definitely thrown a curveball in this last -- last few months, that they can continue their -- their education. As we have learned - I see my Senator here that represents Eastern Illinois University - of all the challenges that our State continues to face, higher education, at least in my opinion, can give us the tools to handle those challenges. So I would ask for an Aye vote toward this bill.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Rezin, for what purpose do you seek recognition?

SENATOR REZIN:

Thank you, Madam President. For purposes of some questions to the sponsor, please.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

She indicates she will yield.

SENATOR REZIN:

Sure. Thank you. And I understand, Senator, that you just picked up this bill. And I do appreciate all of the work from the

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working groups in Education and Higher Ed. There's many good things in this bill that we've talked about that we understand that ISBE needs, that our teachers need. But I do have a couple of questions regarding the schools -- the safety schools as we call 'em, or the schools that have been taken over by the school districts. How -- what schools are they and how much money will they be receiving, and will that money then be put into their funding formula or the amount of money that they get every year?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Bertino-Tarrant.

SENATOR BERTINO-TARRANT:

Thank you for that question and, you know, I -- I appreciate the concern with this addition. And as people know in Education Committee, I'm an equal opportunist scrutinizer of bills, so I -- I -- I, too, had concerns, so I did call ISBE. The two schools, I believe, are North Chicago and -- and St. Louis. And it's at 12.1 million dollars. And when I spoke to ISBE, it is a cost-neutral. It's cost-neutral. It's not cost -- costing us any more money. They are asking for the funding to be put into EBM, as opposed to every year these two school districts coming down and we appropriate the same amount of money. So this is not new money; it's just being placed into the EBM. In regards to changing the formula, you know, everyone's the same, that once you get to ninety percent, you -- you change tiers, so this will be no different in regards to these two school districts. And once they receive their level, they'll be at -- they'll -- they'll - the ninety percent level - they will change tiers, like every other school district would.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

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Senator Rezin.

SENATOR REZIN:

Thank you. I think -- I think I heard half of that. It's -
- it's hard to understand. Yeah. I appreciate that. I just want
to be clear here. And I understand, because we've talked about
education funding for years. We understand the importance of
helping school districts that have been taking -- taken over by
the State because of their -- essentially because of their
finances. You know, I've talked often about a school district
that I represented that was very close to being taken over by the
State. But the process is, when you are taken over by the State,
State comes in, they help you with your plan, and then they also
give you additional money to help you get back on your feet. And
that's essentially what we're doing here. Once you have a plan in
place, and you're on the pathway -- the correct pathway of going
forward, then, in the past, those school districts would have to
come back down here and ask for that additional money that has
helped them get back on track. So what we're doing here is taking
that money that has been given to the schools that were taken over
by the State to help them get back on track. Our -- my concern,
our concern -- and, again, you know, we all want to help the
schools. I had one in my district as well. I'm not quite sure
who represents these school districts, but our concern is that we
haven't talked about it. It hasn't been vetted. This piece was
not talked about in the working group. It was added at the last
minute. When we say it's only twelve million dollars, well, you
know the fierce battles that we have down here dealing with school
funding; it's twelve million dollars away from other schools, in
our opinion, because there's one pot of dollars. So, again, maybe

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this is a good thing. I don't know enough about it is what I'm trying to say here. I have more questions than answers. I wish it would have been debated. And for that reason, even though there's a lot of good things in this bill, I think that you'll see some No votes on here. I think -- you know, and then hopefully we can get our questions answered maybe next year about what this entails. Are there safeguards in place to make sure that these school districts continue best practices from this point forward? But, until then though, I think that we'll have some No votes on this. Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Leader Lightford, for what reason do you seek recognition?

SENATOR LIGHTFORD:

To the bill, Madam President.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

To the bill.

SENATOR LIGHTFORD:

Thank -- thank you, Madam President. Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senate, I would like to thank the subgroup who really worked hard on making sure that we had a solid education package to move forward. I know it's some unconventional times, but we tried to look at bills and figure out which bucket they would best fit in. I know that both of these school districts lost total control of their school districts. First, they were under financial oversight before the State came in and completely took over. So, for the last four years, our State has been governing these school districts. And I think what we don't want to lose sight of is including these resources in the evidence-based model would allow these school districts to get up to adequacy faster, which could

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in turn allow us to turn the school district back over so that we don't have the responsibility of -- of either one of these school districts. It's disappointing that we worked so well together and ninety-nine percent of anything isn't good enough for a Yes vote. That's the disappointing part, that we would stand here today and say, "Well, my leadership says that if it's not a hundred percent, then I can't support it". I think that all the other initiatives that are in this package were from Members across both aisles in this Chamber. And I think it deserves an Aye vote from all of us. So I -- I'd hope that we would allow these school districts an opportunity to get on the right side of things. It is cost-neutral because they were getting these resources already. But if we put it in the evidence-based model, I think will be a -- a better situation for us to manage what they're doing and move them from oversight much quicker. I encourage an Aye vote.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Senator Bertino-Tarrant, to close.

SENATOR BERTINO-TARRANT:

Yeah, thank you very much. Just a final -- I -- I do want to be clear, you know, I -- I -- I do not think it's only -- I don't recall saying only twelve million. That is a lot of money and I -- I appreciate the fact that it is a lot of money that we are dedicating to these schools. But, again - the Leader just mentioned it as well - this is cost-neutral. They -- it is money that's already allocated to them and so they are not getting a gift per se or extra money. And again, it is for these school districts to help their students and get them to an adequate level. So I appreciate the conversation. I appreciate Leader Lightford for her work with the working group. And I ask for an Aye vote.

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PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HOLMES)

Thank you. The question is, shall the Senate concur in House Amendments 1, 3, 4, and 5 to Senate Bill 1569. All those in favor will vote Aye. Opposed, Nay. The voting is open. Have all voted who wish? We are now going to proceed to voting in groups of ten. Again, we will move on to the next group and, Senators, if you have not yet voted, you may still come to the Floor to vote until the voting is closed. Beginning with Senators Anderson, Aquino, Barickman, Belt, Bennett, Bertino-Tarrant, Brady, Bush, Castro, and Crowe, please come to the Floor. Senators Cullerton, Cunningham, Curran, DeWitte, Ellman, Feigenholtz, Fine, Fowler, Gillespie, Glowiak Hilton, please come to the Floor to vote. That is Senators Anderson, Aquino, Barickman, Belt, Bennett, Bertino-Tarrant, Brady, Bush, Castro, Crowe, Cullerton, Cunningham, Curran, DeWitte, Ellman, Feigenholtz, Fine, Fowler, Gillespie, and Glowiak Hilton. Senators Harris, Hastings, Hunter, Jones, Joyce, Koehler, Landek, Lightford, and Link, please come to the Floor. Senators Manar, Martinez, McClure, McConchie, Morrison, Muñoz, Murphy, Oberweis, Peters, and Plummer. That's Harris, Hastings, Hunter, Jones, Joyce, Koehler, Landek, Lightford, Link, Manar, Martinez, McClure, McConchie, Morrison, Muñoz, Murphy, Oberweis, Peters, and Plummer. Senators Rezin, Righter, Rose, Schimpf, Sims, Stadelman, Steans, Stewart, Syverson, and Tracy, please come to the Floor to vote. Senators Van Pelt, Villanueva, Villivalam, Weaver, Wilcox, and President Harmon, come to the Floor to vote. Senators Anderson, Ellman, Curran, McClure, Tracy. Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Take the record. On that question, there are 42 Ayes, 13 Nays, and none voting Present. Having received the required constitutional majority, the Senate

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does concur in House Amendments 1, 3, 4, and 5 to Senate Bill 1569, and the bill is declared passed. The Senate stands in recess to the call of the Chair. We will be coming back. When we come back, we will be voting. The Senate stands in recess.

(SENATE STANDS IN RECESS/SENATE RECONVENES)

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR CUNNINGHAM)

The First Special Session will come to order. Mr. Secretary, Committee Reports. Pardon me, Messages from the House.

SECRETARY ANDERSON:

A Message from the House by Mr. Hollman, Clerk.

Mr. President - I am directed to inform the Senate that the House of Representatives has concurred with the Senate in the passage of a bill of the following title, to wit:

Senate Bill 685.

Together with the following amendments which are attached, in the adoption of which I am instructed to ask the concurrence of the Senate, to wit:

House Amendments 1 and 2 to Senate Bill 685.

Passed the House, as amended, May 22nd, 2020. John W. Hollman, Clerk of the House.

We have received like Messages on Senate Bill 2099, with House Amendments 1, 2, and 3; and Senate Bill 2541, with House Amendment 1. Passed the House, as amended, May 22nd, 2020. John W. Hollman, Clerk of the House.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR CUNNINGHAM)

Senator Hunter is recognized for an announcement.

SENATOR HUNTER:

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Thank you, Mr. President. The Senate Democrats will caucus for thirty minutes upon recess.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR CUNNINGHAM)

Senator Curran is recognized for an announcement.

SENATOR CURRAN:

Thank you, Mr. -- thank you, Mr. President. The Senate Republicans will likewise caucus for thirty minutes in Room 212.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR CUNNINGHAM)

The First Special Session of the 101st General Assembly stands in recess to the call of the Chair. When we return to the Floor in approximately a half hour, we will be taking up Floor action requiring votes. The Senate stands in recess.

(SENATE STANDS IN RECESS/SENATE RECONVENES)

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

The First Special Session of the Senate will come to order. Will the Committee on Assignments please come to the Senate Floor? Committee on Assignments, please come to the Senate Floor. Mr. Secretary, Committee Reports.

SECRETARY ANDERSON:

Senator Lightford, Chairperson of the Committee on Assignments, reports the following Legislative Measures have been assigned: Be Approved for Consideration - House Bill 2924, Motion to Concur with House Amendments 1 through 3 to Senate Bill 2099, Motion to Concur with House Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 2541, Motion to Concur with House Amendments 1 and 2 to Senate Bill 685.

Signed, Senator Kimberly Lightford, Chairperson.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

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Supplemental Calendar No. 4 has been distributed. So if you'll turn to that Calendar, we'll start in just a moment. All right. On Supplemental Calendar No. 4, if you would go to Senate Bill 2099. President Harmon. Would you like to present your motion? All right, we'll proceed with Senate Bill 2099. President Harmon, to explain your motion. Mr. Secretary, please read the motion.

ACTING SECRETARY KAISER:

I move to concur with the House in the adoption of their Amendments 1, 2, and 3 to Senate Bill 2099.

Signed by Senator Harmon.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

President Harmon, to explain your motion.

SENATOR HARMON:

Thank you, Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senate. The House has amended Senate Bill 2099 and sent it back to us for concurrence. As amended, the Act -- the -- the bill creates the Coronavirus Urgent Remediation Emergency Borrowing Act or the CURE Borrowing Act. This is legislation authorizing the State to participate in the new Federal Reserve liquidity facility created as a part of the federal CARES Act. And it -- essentially allows us to access a line of credit - a bridge loan if you will - available to all states and local governments to deal with the profound failure of revenue resulting from this pandemic. I'd be happy to try to answer any of your questions.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

Is there any discussion? Senator Curran, for what purpose do you seek recognition?

SENATOR CURRAN:

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Question of the sponsor, Mr. President.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

Sponsor says that he will yield.

SENATOR CURRAN:

Thank you, Mr. President. Senator, this allows borrowing up to a five-billion-dollar threshold, if -- if I'm correct in -- in reading this. How was that -- do you know, how was that five-billion-dollar threshold determined?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

President Harmon.

SENATOR HARMON:

It's -- it is an -- the -- if I understand the program correctly, the capacity to -- to borrow is actually much higher for the State of Illinois based on our economic profile. I believe the Governor's Office determined that the five-billion-dollar amount was sufficient to try to navigate the next several months as we sort out the depths of the economic hit to our revenues and the events that might unfold over the next half a year to a year that will help us understand the real depths of this budget shortfall.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

Senator Curran.

SENATOR CURRAN:

And the -- Senator, what is the -- the -- the expectation on repaying this five billion dollars that is tied or related to the anticipated relief coming from the federal government?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

President Harmon.

SENATOR HARMON:

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Thank you, Mr. President. First of all - I want to be very clear - we are not proposing to borrow five billion dollars on day one. This is really a credit facility. It's a -- it's a borrowing facility available to the State to borrow as needed. If, in fact, there were to be a significant federal relief package for states and local governments to deal with the economic -- the revenue shortfall, we may not have borrowed anything at that point. We may have borrowed some to navigate cash flow and we could presumably repay it immediately from the proceeds of that relief package. Is that the -- is that the question you were asking?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

Senator Curran.

SENATOR CURRAN:

...to the bill.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

To the bill -- to the motion.

SENATOR CURRAN:

Mr. President, I -- the uncertainty with regards to what is coming, if any relief, from Washington, D.C., in terms of a -- a subsequent stimulus package, right now is tenuous at best and hard to predict. And I -- based upon that, I don't believe that this is our best step forward until we know that. This is rushed and I -- I respectfully am going to be a No vote.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

Is there any further discussion? Senator Rezin, for what purpose do you seek recognition?

SENATOR REZIN:

Thank you, Mr. President. I have a question for the sponsor, please.

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PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

Sponsor indicates he will yield.

SENATOR REZIN:

Thank you, Mr. President, President Harmon. What are your plans if -- this short-term loan is predicated on us receiving five billion dollars from the federal government. Are we sure that we're receiving five billion dollars from the government? And how will we repay this?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

President Harmon.

SENATOR HARMON:

I -- I think that I understand the question. And in my exchange with Senator Curran -- again, we are not proposing to borrow five billion dollars on day one. It is -- it is a credit facility essentially - again, a bridge loan. We would borrow as needed to meet our current obligations. That may be something we do later in the year. It may be something we do in -- in small tranches. And then -- and I do believe that there will be significant federal relief coming for all states, because all states are in this circumstance and only the federal government can respond appropriately. And it is certainly our hope that over the next several months, we will know much more and be able to make educated decisions about when and if to access the credit facility.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

Senator Rezin.

SENATOR REZIN:

So just to be clear though, this is a -- a borrowing plan from the federal government. This is a line of credit that you

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plan on drawing off of to balance the budget in hopes that we receive federal funds in the future. Correct?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

President Harmon.

SENATOR HARMON:

Receiving federal funds would certainly be the -- the easiest and quickest way for our State and every other state to deal with this. And I am hopeful that that will come to pass.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

Senator Rezin.

SENATOR REZIN:

To the bill, Mr. President.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

To the motion.

SENATOR REZIN:

Thank you. And again, President Harmon, I -- I appreciate your -- your candor. And our concerns with this bill initially is, I mean, it is only March {sic} 22nd and, you know, one of the first big bills that we our voting on is a bill to borrow money. We haven't even seen the budget yet or the BIMP bill. And, you know, we've had many working groups for the past several weeks. One, in particular, that many of us sat on, I believe with Senator Koehler, was the economic revitalization work group. And in that work group were incredible suggestions when asked, for small businesses, what do you need in order to get the economy going? Because we all agree here that short-term borrowing is not going to get us to a balanced budget. So our small businesses, our business groups need to be part -- a partner with us in order to get the economy going, and I have a whole list of good suggestions

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from the small businesses, from IRMA, from the Manufacturers, from the Restaurant Association about what they need during COVID-19 to be a willing partner with us in -- in this difficult time. To date, I haven't seen any bills with the suggestions from these businesses that if only we would help them in their cash crunch time, because they have to go out and borrow money as well to balance their budgets. They don't have access to lines of credit. They've come before us and they asked very reasonable requests to allow them to reopen their business so we can, once again, start employing people and -- and then receive more money into our revenue -- or into our budget. You know, my hope was that we would see many of these good suggestions and we -- we would be dealing with them while we're here down in Springfield. I am disappointed, again, you know. I understand this bill just came over from the House so... But my disappointment is that it's sending a message to everyone across the State of Illinois, and that message is, instead of sitting down and taking the -- you know, making the hard decisions with our partners in order to get us out of where we are with our budget, that the first step we take is taking advantage of borrowing money from the federal government. Again, you know, I look at this as a short-term borrowing. It's short-term thinking and we still have long-term consequences from it. So thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

Further discussion? Senator Righter.

SENATOR RIGHTER:

That's you, right, Mr. President? I see you behind the mask.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

Senator Righter.

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SENATOR RIGHTER:

Excuse me. Thank you very much, Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senate. Actually, I'd like to go directly to the motion to concur, please.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

To the motion.

SENATOR RIGHTER:

Thank you very much, Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senate. My colleagues, Senator Curran and Senator Rezin, have asked some questions and the Senate President has responded to those, and rather than being dilatory and asking more questions, I'm just going to put a couple thoughts out there. But before I do that, I think that on behalf of the Republican Members, I want to offer up a thank you to the Senate President and to his Members who have engaged in a thoughtful process with regards to the work groups and the conversations that have taken place on those. I - - I think to a Member, our Members would say they have appreciated the thoughtful and honest dialogue we've had on issues. That doesn't mean we agreed on everything. That doesn't mean that everything that we're going to do here before whenever we adjourn is what we wanted, but there was an opportunity to engage and put our ideas before you. We want to thank you for that. We also want to recognize that crafting a budget during these times is an unprecedented task that's been laid before us, and as with any budget, even in times of robust growth, no one walks away happy. That will most certainly be the case here in this process. I have deep concerns about the borrowing as we stand here on the Floor on May 22nd. There are times, history teaches us, that there may be ideas that are good depending upon the timing. Something that's

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a good idea on May 22nd or perhaps not a good idea on May 22nd may turn out to be a good idea on June 22nd, because you've had thirty days to receive more information, and I'm going to suggest that that may be the case here. Now, we have a sense of what we think Washington is going to do. Some of us are talking to the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives and others are in contact with the Majority Leader and others may be talking to the White House. So we have that sense, but for anyone who's even been in this building for more than six months, you know that your sense about what may be the outcome of a complicated process, particularly one as choked with politics as that out in Washington, D.C., may not very well end up the way you think it should or will. And there's something I want you to think about with regards to that. If we move forward and borrow the money - and I appreciate that this is an authorization - but if we move forward and borrow five billion, or anything close to that, and then the stimulus package that we are all dreaming of at night that's going to come our way doesn't come our way or falls significantly short of what our hopes or expectations may be, will you be prepared to wade into the General Revenue Fund budget and make the reductions that are necessary in order to pay the additional debt service? Because -- maybe that won't happen - I hope it doesn't happen - but it could. And the question is, are you prepared for that? I would also suggest this with regards to this borrowing plan, is the House has a budget over in its Chamber. My understanding is, while it's close to its final form, it's not in its final form. And what do we know about how much of this is going to be necessary to plug the hole that may exist? Part of that depends on what? The spending level in the fiscal year '21 budget. That's going to

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drive to some extent how much of this borrowing authorization will have to be utilized. My point is this, is that we may have to do this, but we do not have to do this now. And it would be my suggestion that we wait - since a supermajority vote is required on this anyway, that we wait until we have more information from the authorities in Washington about what money they're going to put on the table and what we really need to do. Mr. President, thank you for your consideration. Thank you, President Harmon.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

President Harmon, to close.

SENATOR HARMON:

Thank you, Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senate. Senator Righter, thank you for your kind remarks and to all of the speakers for the civil debate. I would say this, borrowing is far from optimal, but it is simply the best option among the bad options that we have. I would also point out that it is absolutely sound economics to do this at this point in time. Senator Righter mentioned these good ideas at points in time. This is the economic theory in execution that got the country through the Great Depression. This is the time when government should be spending - when others can't. We can keep the wheels turning and the people that depend upon the services the State offers and for the State to participate in the economy in a way that keeps money moving and people employed. This is the time that we should be doing it. The Federal Reserve has bent over backwards to make this available to our State and to other states to get through this to keep the wheels turning. So I would say that if Nancy Pelosi, Mitch McConnell, and Donald Trump all think this is a good idea and one that we should employ, we should all vote Yes. I ask for your Aye

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votes.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

This question shall require thirty-six votes. And the question is, shall the Senate concur in the House Amendments 1, 2, and 3 to Senate Bill 2-0-9-9. All those in favor will vote Aye. Opposed, Nay. The voting is open. Have all voted who wish? We will call the Members to the Floor -- Floor in groups of ten. Senators Anderson, Aquino, Barickman, Belt, Bennett, Bertino-Tarrant, Brady, Bush, Castro, and Crowe, please come to the Floor to vote. Next list will be Senators Cullerton, Cunningham, Curran, DeWitte, Ellman, Feigenholtz, Fine, Fowler, Gillespie, Glowiak Hilton. You may come to the Floor in just a bit. The third group will be Senators Harris, Hastings, Holmes, Hunter, Jones, Joyce, Koehler, Landek, Lightford, and Link. You may please come to the Floor to vote. Senators Manar, Martinez, McClure, McConchie, Morrison, Muñoz, Murphy, Oberweis, Peters, and Plummer, please come to the Floor to vote. Senators Rezin, Righter, Rose, Schimpf, Sims, Stadelman, Steans, Stewart, -- Syverson, and Tracy, please come to the Floor to vote. Senators Van Pelt, Villanueva, Villivalam, Weaver, Wilcox, and President Harmon, please come to the Floor to vote. ...start calling through the list. Senator Aquino, Senator Belt, Senator Castro, Senator Collins, Senator Holmes, Senator Martwick, Senator McGuire, Senator Schimpf, Villanueva, please come to the Floor to vote. Senator Aquino, Senator Martwick, Senator Castro, Senator Collins. Senator Collins. All right. Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Take the record. On that question, there are 37 Ayes, 19 Nays, and none voting Present. And having received more than the required constitutional majority, the Senate does concur in House

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Amendments No. 1, 2, and 3 to Senate Bill 2-0-9-9, and the bill is declared passed. The motion is declared passed. With leave of the Body, we're going to stay on Supplemental Calendar No. 4. We're going to go to House Bills 2nd Reading. Senator Harmon, are you ready on Amendment {sic} 2924? Mr. Secretary, please read -- please read the bill.

SECRETARY ANDERSON:

House Bill 2924.

(Secretary reads title of bill)

2nd Reading of the bill. No committee {sic} or Floor amendments reported.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

3rd Reading. Next we're going to go to Concurrences. We're going to do Senate Bill 2541. Senator Steans. Mr. Secretary, please read the motion.

SECRETARY ANDERSON:

I move to concur with the House in the adoption of their Amendment No. 1 to Senate Bill 2541.

Filed by Senator Steans.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

Senator Steans, to read your motion.

SENATOR STEANS:

Yes, I -- this motion is to concur on the Senate bill that has the hospital assessment program. It has been widely worked on by the bipartisan, bicameral Medicaid working group. The hospital -- the Hospital Association, the administration, SEIU, safety net hospitals all are in support of this. Generally, what it does is it -- the -- the current hospital assessment program ends at the end of this fiscal year, so this redoes it. It's a 3.8-billion-

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dollar program. The new assessment program adds four hundred and about fifty million dollars' net gain for the hospitals. Two hundred and fifty million of that goes to the assessment and NIPS payments; a hundred and fifty-million is for hospital transformation; and then there's another fifty million for physician rate increases. I think, as everyone knows, more money will be following the claims and then there'll be directed pools for particular classes of hospitals. Very much appreciate the support of Leader Syverson and Senator Righter, their team over there, as well as the House, in coming together with this bill. I think it's a win-win and, clearly, we've already turned it into the federal government for their approval and we're building it into our budget as well. And very much look forward to it passing unanimously here as it had in the House. That would be my hope. Thank you very much. Happy to answer any questions.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

Is there any discussion? Senator Syverson.

SENATOR SYVERSON:

Thank you -- thank you, Mr. President. To the bill.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

Motion.

SENATOR SYVERSON:

To the motion. I just want to again stress and reiterate and thank Senator Steans for her leadership on this. There was so many hours spent on this, and the good news is that this is a -- a -- a -- a program that's going to bring in a lot of federal dollars and a program that's going to help every hospital in the State of Illinois serve the Medicaid population easier and in a fairer way. And so I appreciate your leadership, Senator Steans,

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on this and the hours and hours of work. This was a very, very complicated procedure, and the math that goes into this and the hours that were spent on this committee clearly paid off with a great program. So, thank you for your help on this and certainly urge unanimous support on this bill.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

Senator Steans, to close.

SENATOR STEANS:

Thank you. Yes, I should just add that while we set up the money for the hospital transformation, this makes it clear that we're going to have to come back to give guidance to HFS, before those dollars are spent, on how to make that work. And thank you very much and look forward to a lot of green votes.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

Thank you. The question is, shall the Senate concur in House Amendments {sic} No. 1 to Senate Bill 2541. All those in favor will vote Aye. Opposed, Nay. The voting is open. Have all voted who wish? We will now call the Members to the Floor in groups of ten. Senators -- Senators Anderson, Aquino, Barickman, Belt, Bennett, Bertino-Tarrant, Brady, Bush, Castro, and Crowe, please come to the Floor to vote. Senators Cullerton, Cunningham, Curran. I guess we got there already, didn't we? Okay, let's call through the ones that aren't here. Is Bennett here? Senator Bennett, Stadelman, Wilcox, Mr. President. Mr. President. Do -- do you want to vote, Mr. President, please. Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Take the record. On that question, there are 56 Ayes, no Nays, and none voting Present. And having received the required constitutional majority, the Senate does concur in House Amendments {sic} No. 1 to Senate Bill 2541, and the bill is

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declared passed. Senator Martinez in the Chair.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR MARTINEZ)

Ladies and Gentlemen, continuing on on the Supplemental Calendar No. 4, in the middle of the page, Senate Bill 685. Senator Koehler, do you wish to proceed? Mr. Secretary, read the motion.

SECRETARY ANDERSON:

I move to concur with the House in the adoption of their Amendments 1 and 2 to Senate Bill 685.

Filed by Senator Koehler.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR MARTINEZ)

Senator Koehler.

SENATOR KOEHLER:

...Madam President. This -- this bill deletes all -- this amendment deletes all and becomes the bill. This amends the Property Tax Code to allow the chief county assessment officer to approve homestead exemptions without application for the 2020 taxable year for persons with disabilities, veterans with disabilities, senior citizens who qualify for the assessment freeze. This amendment also directs counties with less than three million inhabitants to postpone the annual 2020 tax sale and allows the ability to waive property tax interest penalties. This passed the House unanimously with 115 votes, and I would appreciate an Aye vote in the Senate. Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR MARTINEZ)

Can -- can you hold, please? Ladies and Gentlemen, there is a bill being presented and cannot be heard. Senator Koehler.

SENATOR KOEHLER:

I would appreciate an Aye vote.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR MARTINEZ)

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Senator Righter, for what purpose do you rise?

SENATOR RIGHTER:

Thank you, Madam President. Will the sponsor yield, please?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR MARTINEZ)

The sponsor indicates he will.

SENATOR RIGHTER:

Thank you, Madam President. Senator Koehler -- Senator Koehler, I -- I'm going to do something very unpopular here. I'm going to ask you to go through the highlights again. I could not hear. And this is the time of Session when things -- we assume language is A and sometimes it's A plus and the plus gets us in trouble. Can you walk through it again for me, please?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR MARTINEZ)

Senator Koehler. But before, please, everyone, could you please keep it down so Senator Koehler can be heard? Thank you. Senator Koehler.

SENATOR KOEHLER:

And are -- are you wanting the -- the -- the detailed version or the Executive Summary? I'll read some of the details. This allows the chief county assessment officer to approve homestead exemptions for persons with disabilities, veterans with disabilities, and senior citizens for the 2020 taxable year. It also approves that the county board declare it a local disaster as provided by IEMA related to COVID-19 public health emergency; the owner of record of property as of 1 -- January 1st of '20 is the same owner of record as of 1/1/19; that the exemption of the taxable -- the 2019 taxable year has not been determined to be an erroneous exemption; and the application {sic} (applicant) for the 2019 taxable year has not asked for the exemption to be removed.

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Then, nothing shall preclude the veteran whose service continued {sic} (connected) disability rating has changed since 2019 the {sic} (the 2019) exemption that was granted from applying for the exemption based on the subsequent service. In other words, this is for the 2020 taxable year; it's for just veterans, people with disabilities, veterans with disabilities, and senior citizens. Then it also takes and amends the -- for the counties less than three million inhabitants to postpone the annual 2020 tax sale and allows them the ability to waive property tax interest penalties.
PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR MARTINEZ)

Senator Righter, do you wish to continue with questions?

SENATOR RIGHTER:

I do, Madam President. I want to say thank you for tamping down the noise in the Chamber. Senator Koehler, thank you for your willingness to walk through that again. I want to ask -- dig in a little bit deeper into the piece of the bill that you mentioned toward the end regarding the tax sales, the prohibition, as I understand it, against tax sales, at least for a period of time. Can -- can you -- I listened to the debate in the House. The debate in the House, to me, was rather confusing about what the bill allows or doesn't allow. And I know the -- the county treasurers have signaled opposition to this. Can you walk through that in a little more detail about what the treasurers are going to be dealing with if this becomes law?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR MARTINEZ)

Senator Koehler.

SENATOR KOEHLER:

Thank you, Madam President. Notwithstanding any other provision of the law, for any county with less than three hundred

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-- three million inhabitants, the annual tax sale that would ordinarily be held in the calendar year 2020 shall be held no earlier than a hundred and twenty days after the effective date or until the first day of the first month during which there is no longer a statewide COVID-19 public health emergency, as evidenced by an -- an effective disaster declaration of the Governor covering all counties in the State. So this basically delays that.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR MARTINEZ)

Senator Righter.

SENATOR RIGHTER:

Oftentimes, particularly, Senator, at this point in the calendar, when we're moving big things that have lots of pieces and -- we think they're great ideas, and they may be, but there are ripple effects that are unintended consequences, and I'm going to ask you about one of those now with regards to the tax sales. Do you have a sense, Senator, about the degree to which locals or counties depend upon the revenue from the tax sales for their operations? In other words, if we're telling them -- I mean, I -- I -- now, I'm going to give you a macro example. So we delayed our tax filing and payment deadline by three months here in Illinois, which is creating a significant cash flow problem for the State, so let's boil that down to the county level. To what degree do counties depend upon the revenue from these tax sales in order to fund their operations, like their sheriff's departments, and run their jails, or run their public health departments?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR MARTINEZ)

Senator Koehler.

SENATOR KOEHLER:

Thank you, Madam President. I don't have the exact figures

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on that. I will tell you, just from being a past county board member and a city council member, that there is a portion of revenue that is -- those bodies depend upon; however, it's not a major piece of -- of any public entity's budget. I'm sorry, I don't have any more definitive numbers than that, but it's -- it's a small piece of an overall budget.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR MARTINEZ)

Senator Righter,

SENATOR RIGHTER:

I -- to the bill - to the motion, if I might, Madam President.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR MARTINEZ)

To the motion, Mr. -- Senator Righter.

SENATOR RIGHTER:

I -- I think generally this is a good piece of legislation. I would encourage our Members to support it. I do think that that's going to be an issue, particularly since we're not requiring that a lack of property tax payment and delaying the sale has to be caused by the pandemic. There's no showing of that, but I understand that. With that, I would encourage an Aye vote. Thank you very much, Madam President.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR MARTINEZ)

Any further discussion? Seeing none, Senator -- Senator Koehler, to close.

SENATOR KOEHLER:

And -- and thank you, Senator Righter, for your questions. I understand the -- the pressure that's put on -- on governments for this, but this is an unusual year. This sunsets after this and so this is just for the period of time which we're in this particular crisis. I'd appreciate an Aye vote.

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PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR MARTINEZ)

The question is, shall the Senate concur in House Amendment No. 4 to Senate Bill 6-8... I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Amendments 1 and 2. All those in favor will vote Aye. Opposed, Nay. The voting is now open. Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? We will now have the following Senators please come to the Floor: Senator Bennett, Bertino-Tarrant, Senator Collins, Senator Crowe, Senator Cunningham, Senator DeWitte, Senator Harris, Senator Landek, Senator Lightford, Senator Manar, Senator Martinez - oh, sorry - Senator Oberweis, Senator Martwick, Senator McGuire, Senator Oberweis, Senator Sims, Senator Stewart, Senator Tracy. Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Take... All right, take the record. On that question, we have 56 voting Aye, 0 voting Nay, 0 voting Present. Having received the required constitutional majority, the Senate -- does concur in House Amendments 1 and 2 to Senate Bill 685, and the bill is declared passed. Senator Koehler back in the Chair.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

Senator Hunter, for what purpose do you seek recognition?

SENATOR HUNTER:

Purpose of an announcement, Mr. President.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

Please make your announcement.

SENATOR HUNTER:

The Senate Democrats will caucus tomorrow for one hour at 9 o'clock. Repeat: The Senate Democrats will caucus tomorrow for one hour. Thank you very much.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

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Leader Brady.

SENATOR BRADY:

Thank you, Mr. President. I have to apologize to my Senate colleagues on this side of the aisle. We'll caucus immediately for three hours and tomorrow from 6 until 10. We will be caucusing tomorrow at 9 a.m. for one hour.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR KOEHLER)

Thank you. There being no further business to come before the First Special Session of the -- First Special Session of the Senate stands adjourned until the hour of 10 a.m. on the 23rd day of May 2020. The First Special Session stands adjourned.