

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

Speaker Tarver: "The House will be in order. Members will be in their chairs. We should be led in prayer today by Chaplin Steve Smith. Chaplin Smith is with The Hope Center in Albion, Illinois. Chaplin Smith is the guest of Rep. Severin. Members and guests are asked to refrain from starting their laptops, turn off all cell phones, and rise for the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance."

Chaplin Smith: "Well, hello, everyone. My message has changed, and I'm a storyteller, but I will end in a prayer. But I wanted to start off, if you look over there, there's a picture I had. I don't know all the rules, but it's... it's the pros in the NBA: Wilt Chamberlain, Larry Bird, Magic Johnson, John Stockton, a group of some of the most ferocious competitors I've ever heard of in my life. And they fought like cats and dogs. Hopefully, you guys will get where I'm going with this. But when they played on the Dream Team and when they came together for something that was common, especially for America, they were unstoppable. I have no idea who most of you are, but that's one of my prayers, is that we start working together, unity. Most of this is scratched out. I had a friend of mine that is stuck over in Nepal, his family is, and he asked me to read a letter to you 'cause he wanted your help across the party lines. I'm not going to read it, but I will tell you a couple things that he says on here. The first little paragraph, he talks about Mike Bost, and how he started him in 2022 to help get his family back over here. He talks about U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth helping him because of the redistricting. And the last little thing I have down, he had a plea to say, 'Steve, when you go, let's get this family

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

home.' And I said, yes, I don't care what my prayer is. This is the most important thing right now. God brought me here for a reason, and I wanted to deliver that message. This morning, at 7:18 a.m., I received this message. He says, 'I fly to Qatar on Monday, and I bring my family back to St. Louis.' Thank you anybody that played a part in that. I can't make this stuff up. That happened this morning, and that's something that I seen people working together. I played basketball in high school. Two of my worst critics were older than me, and we didn't get along. It's been over 40 years. Every morning now, this guy reached out to me. We do a thing, started on February 1 called Coffee and Scripture. We're coming together now after 40 years. I hope it doesn't take that long, folks. But I start my morning off at 5, 6 o'clock every morning with these guys that I didn't agree with, and now we're agreeing that, hey, we... we got to grow up. My wife told me, 'Don't be political today.' She says, 'Be nice.' I'd like to share this. My wife has been a county clerk for 23 years. I don't care what party she is. She's the most nonpolitical person you'll ever come across. But I've gone to a lot of her meetings, and I can tell you this, I don't know who a Democrat or Republican county clerk is. They all want to see good elections. I've seen them work together, and I love it. So, I do see the good on us working together. This is my prayer for everybody here. Gracious and sovereign God, we pause in this moment to acknowledge your presence and seek your guidance. Your word reminds us in Ecclesiastes, 'Two people are better than one, because they have good return for their labor: If either one of them falls down, one can help

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

the other up.' In this House, filled with many voices, perspectives, and responsibilities, may we not be divided by difference but united by purpose. May we labor for the individual... may we labor not for individual credit but for the collective good. When one falters, may another lift. When one struggles, may another support. Teach us to honor one another with humility and mutual respect. Grant wisdom to each person here, clarity in debate, and compassion in decision-making. May this House serve the people of Illinois with integrity and courage. May the work done here today bring light, healing, and hope to every community in our great state. In your holy name, I pray. Amen. Thank you very much. And I'm going to ask my friend... oh, sorry. When we're done... can I do that now, Dave? Sorry, I don't..."

Speaker Tarver: "We will be led in the Pledge of Allegiance today by Representative Morris."

Morris - et al: "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

Speaker Tarver: "Roll Call for Attendance. Leader Gabel is recognized to report any excused absences on the Democratic side of the aisle."

Gabel: "Speaker, let the record show that Representative Ammons, Scherer, and Syed are excused today."

Speaker Tarver: "Let the record... I'm sorry, excuse me. Leader Keicher is recognized to report any excused absences on the Republican side of the aisle."

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

Keicher: "Thank you, Speaker. Please let the record reflect that Representative Dr. Bill Hauter is excused for today."

Speaker Tarver: "Have all recorded themselves who wish? Thank you. Mr. Clerk, please take the record. There being 114 Members answering the roll, a quorum is present. Leader McCombie, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

McCombie: "Thank you, Speaker. I would like to introduce my page for the day. If I could have everybody's attention. This here is Miss Harper Sherwood. Some of you know her dad fondly, James Sherwood, and his wife, Gretchen. They are here up in the gallery there. She is, Miss Harper, is a proud kindergartner at St. James Lutheran School. She already has a love for learning, especially math. Her favorite treat, I think we can all agree on this, is a cookie cake with vanilla ice cream. And in her free time, she enjoys play dates at the park and game nights with her mom and dad. While she doesn't have any siblings or pets yet, and this is where I'm going to give a plug and I think we should all vote on whether or not she can have a cavapoo, she certainly is trying to convince her parents of that. When it comes to music, her top pick is anything Travis Weaver, by Taylor Swift, who might as well be her own genre. This marks Harper's very first trip to Springfield to the Capitol. I remember when she was born, and she couldn't be more excited to be here. Please, let's welcome her to her Capitol."

Speaker Tarver: "Welcome, Harper. We're all Swifties. Speaker... Speaker Welch in the Chair."

Speaker Welch: "Members, shhh. Members, today it is my great honor to welcome the Honorable Richard Hyde, consul general for the

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

United Kingdom in Chicago. A career diplomat with experience across the world, Consul General Hyde previously led the United Kingdom's outreach efforts in Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, and New Mexico. He also brings a wealth of experience in international trade, leading the UK's Caribbean and Central American trade mission and heading an advanced manufacturing investment team in London. In his role as consul general in Chicago, he now leads the UK's efforts in 14 Central and Western states and plays a crucial role in fostering, sustaining, and strengthening the special relationship between the United Kingdom and the United States. For generations, our two countries have shared bonds of trade, tourism, and culture, and together, we've defended our shared commitment to democratic self-governance across the world. Above all, we share a history that shows that we are strongest when we stand together. Consul General Hyde is a guest of mine today, along with Representative Kim du Buclet, who is proud that her daughter, Alexandria, is currently living in London, and the consul general tells me they are happy to keep her there. Please, ladies and gentlemen, I am so proud to continue that work with our friend, Consul General Richard Hyde. Please give him a warm welcome as he comes to us."

Consul General Hyde: "Well, good afternoon, everybody. Speaker Welch, Honorable Members of the Illinois House of Representatives, thank you for the opportunity to address you today. It's an honor to stand before this esteemed body, the political descendants of my favorite American president, Abraham Lincoln. Though I know this is not the original state

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

House of Lincoln's day, I still feel the weight of history in this place, and I'm truly humbled to stand here today on this dais. There was little that Honest Abe failed to achieve in his life, but one thing he did fail to do was to become Speaker of this House. Speaker Welch, your election as Speaker in 2021 was an historic moment, one that I am sure the Great Emancipator himself would have been proud to witness. So, why is this strange man with a funny accent standing in front of you today? Well, I'm here to speak about a relationship that too often is taken for granted, but yet remains vital to the economic, cultural, and strategic well-being of Illinois. That relationship, if you haven't guessed, is with the United Kingdom. Today, I want to explain to you why the UK matters on a global stage, but, more importantly or as importantly, why it matters in the heart of the American Midwest here in Illinois. The United Kingdom and the United States have what is often referred to as a special relationship, but that relationship is not just between Washington and London. It exists between Illinois and the whole of the UK in our businesses, in our universities, in our communities, and even in our family trees. Illinois is home to over a million people who claim British ancestry. The first British immigrants arrived in the early 1800s and helped shape the state's legal, educational, and political foundations. The father of Chicago's magnificent skyline, Frank Lloyd Wright, was of Welsh origin. In fact, Abraham Lincoln himself was of Welsh descent. His great-great-grandfather was from a tiny village in North Wales called Ysbyty Ifan, which is only 60 miles from my place of birth in Liverpool. Full disclosure, my

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

mother is from North Wales, so I have to put in a fact about North Wales in every speech. But our relationship has evolved from heritage into active daily partnership. The United Kingdom is one of Illinois' top global trading partners. We consistently rank among the top five destinations for Illinois exports. Last year, you exported to us over 2.6 billion dollars' worth of goods, everything from industrial machinery, medical equipment, aerospace components, and agricultural products. The UK is one of the largest foreign investors in Illinois. British companies employ more than 100,000 Illinoisans. These are good jobs, often high-paying, high-skilled positions in sectors like energy, finance, life sciences, and technology. British investment helps you build your tax base, helps you fund your infrastructure, and helps you support your local communities. When a UK firm opens a distribution center in Will County or partner... or partners with a manufacturer in Rockford, it brings real benefits to Illinois families, but we can do so much more. Last month, I was in this building, just around the corner, alongside Governor Pritzker to sign a memorandum of understanding between Illinois and the United Kingdom. This agreement aims to deepen our collaboration on innovation, trade, and investment. From quantum computing to clean energy, this agreement sets the stage for more ambitious relationship that helps to drive economic growth and job creation. We're working together to ensure our talented workers of today and tomorrow are primed to take the opportunities of our new partnership and are prepared to meet the challenges of a complicated and changing world. We want collectively to deliver equitable

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

workforce developments across our many diverse communities. We're natural partners. We're both home to world-leading universities, thriving industries, and some of the best legal and financial services in the world. Our agreement can serve as a foundation for deeper cooperation in fields like quantum, AI, financial and legal services, and clean energy technologies, sectors that will not just define our economies but our societies too in the years to come. Personally, I'm thrilled to see an emphasis on quantum technology. This is an area where the UK and Illinois already lead. On Monday, I was in Washington for a UK-Australia-Illinois joint quantum event with Governor Pritzker. This event recognized that Illinois has positioned itself as the center of a trilateral cooperation and a technology that can deliver real global change. AUKUS, Australia, UK, U.S., is all about defense collaboration. I have a new term, AUKIL, Australia, UK, Illinois is all about quantum. Our partnership is Illinois-wide. Last week, I drove over to Polo in Ogle County to meet with Illinois Farm Bureau President Duncan on his farm. Now, that man knows a thing or two about raising hogs, and he also cooks them pretty good too. He gave us some amazing pulled pork. But that meeting was important 'cause it reminded me that the future of our partnership must include all parts of this state; urban, rural, and everything in between. Whether it's agricultural innovation, manufacturing, or energy technology, we're committed to making sure that every county in Illinois can benefit from our growing ties. Illinois, as you know, is home to some of the world's leading universities, and they have ongoing research partnerships with top British

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

institutions like Oxford, Cambridge, and Imperial College. Whether it's in quantum computing, agritech, medical sciences, AI, UK-Illinois collaboration is driving discovery. These partnerships are helping to develop the next generation of clean energy. They're improving health care, and they're... help tackling global food insecurity. But this collaboration isn't new. Watson and Crick famously won the Nobel Prize for deciphering DNA and creating the double helix at Cambridge University in 1953. Well, James Watson is from Chicago. Francis Crick is British. So, you can literally say UK-Illinois collaboration is in our DNA. Now, while we're making great strides at state level, the broader UK-U.S. relationship has taken off too. Exactly a week ago, our two countries secured a landmark economic agreement, the first of its kind signed with the United States under President Trump. This deal will promote transatlantic trade, secure jobs, increase mutual prosperity, grow business opportunities, and will enhance our collective economic security. It benefits UK and U.S. businesses by removing a range of barriers to trade and improving access across a range of sectors. The deal protects vital industries in both countries. It opens access for British exports of steel, aluminum, aerospace, and cars. And we're lowering our barriers to U.S. products too, including a new quota for American ethanol. Both countries are working together to enhance reciprocal access for beef, something I personally care about. One of the reasons we were able to reach an early deal is that our strong U.S.-UK economic relationship is fair, it's balanced, it's reciprocal. We don't run trade deficits. We have one and a

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

half trillion dollars invested in each other's economies. We have a trade in relationship worth around \$420 billion, and our economic relationship creates over 2.5 million jobs across both countries. For Illinois, this opens the door to more trade, more investment, and more job creation. And selfishly, I have to say, I have to admit, I'd love to see even more Scotch whisky in Chicago. Maybe in return... don't clap too soon. Maybe in return, we could send some Malört to Manchester. Now, I'm from Liverpool. Manchester is, to me, the annoying neighbor. I think they deserve Malört. As... I'm going to get so much trouble for that. As Illinois lawmakers, you are stewards, not only of your communities, but of this state's role in the world. In an increasingly interconnected economy, Illinois' future prosperity depends on strong international partnerships. And the United Kingdom stands ready to be that partner. If you take one message away today, let it be that the United Kingdom sees Illinois as a key strategic and economic partner, the heart of America. And the UK matters to Illinois because we reflect each other's values, innovation, resilience, openness, and partnership. We're not just historical friends or legacy allies, we're living, breathing, modern partners that bring real benefits to your state. By deepening this relationship, we're not only honoring our shared past, we are investing in Illinois' future. We've done extraordinary things together, but I think we're just getting started. Thank you for your time, your service, and your leadership. And we look forward to working with you all, much more together, from across the pond in the Land of Lincoln. Thank you."

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

Speaker Welch: "That was the Honorable Counsel General Richard Hyde. Let's give him another round of applause, please. The honorable counsel has agreed to... to linger with us a little bit here in the well. For any Member who wishes to take a photo with him, he is willing to do that. Leader Tarver is back in the Chair."

Speaker Tarver: "Mr. Clerk, Committee Reports."

Clerk Hollman: "Committee Reports. Representative Blair-Sherlock, Chairperson from the Committee on State Government Administration reports the following committee action on May 14, 2025: recommends be adopted is House Resolution 264, House Resolution 279, House Resolution 283, Floor Amendment(s) 1 to Senate Bill 1884. Representative Mussman, Chairperson from the Committee on Education Policy reports the following committee action on May 15, 2025: recommends be adopted is Floor Amendment(s) 1 to Senate Bill 1672 and Senate Joint Resolution 33. Representative Cassidy, Chairperson from the Committee on Restorative Justice & Public Safety reports following committee action on May 15, 2025: recommends be adopted is House Resolution 290 and Floor Amendment(s) 1 to Senate Bill 1524. Introduction of Resolutions. House Resolution 336, offered by Representative Hammond; and House Resolution 340, offered by Representative Cassidy, are referred to the Rules Committee."

Speaker Tarver: "Mr. Clerk, Rules Report."

Clerk Hollman: "Committee Reports. Representative Gabel, Chairperson from the Committee on Rules reports the following committee action taken on May 15, 2025: approved for consideration, referred to Second Reading is House Bill 250."

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

Speaker Tarver: "Representative Mayfield, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

Mayfield: "Point of personal privilege, please."

Speaker Tarver: "Please proceed."

Mayfield: "I would like to draw your attention to the Democratic side of the aisle. Can you please stand? Today is IL... all the purple shirts, please stand. Today is ILBC Civic Engagement Day. We have over 700 children from throughout the State of Illinois, from the LEARN Romano Butler School, the Neal Math and Science Academy, Family First Center of Lake County, Abbott Middle School, Fiske University (sic-Elementary), LEARN Hunter Perkins School, the Irving Middle School, the Lincoln Magnet School, the Aldridge Elementary School, Dulles Elementary School, Rolling Acres Peoria School, the James Farmer, Jr. Elementary School, the Powell Elementary, the Joseph Lovett Elementary, the Ella Flagg Young School, the Spencer Elementary Technology Academy, the LEARN 8 Middle School, the Barbara A. Sizemore Academy, the Gillespie Elementary, the Jensen Scholastic Academy, and the Family Cares Center. These are all eighth graders. There are 700 of them throughout. You will see them in their purple shirts. If you see them, please take your time and welcome them to the Capitol. They're learning about civic engagement today."

Speaker Tarver: "Welcome to Springfield. Representative Stuart, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

Stuart: "Thank you, Speaker. A point of personal privilege."

Speaker Tarver: "Please proceed."

Stuart: "Thank you. Sorry to interrupt all the photo ops here. I just wanted to introduce to the body... we all rely on our staff

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

so much, and our staff here in Springfield is vital, but so is the staff in our home offices. I have two of the best with me today up in the gallery, and they're probably going to kill me, and they're embarrassed. But I have Claire and Abby. If everybody could give them a warm Springfield welcome, I would appreciate it."

Speaker Tarver: "Welcome to Springfield. Representative Wilhour, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

Wilhour: "Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A point of personal privilege, please."

Speaker Tarver: "Please proceed."

Wilhour: "Thank you. I think it goes without saying that our state is in a crisis. Our budget is blown by billions, and it's blown by billions not because of anything that's happening at the national level. It's blown by billions because of the reckless spending and the irresponsible priorities of the Pritzker administration and the Democrat majority over the last several years. And the taxpayer well is dry. It's past time for tough choices, for hard conversations, and accountability for the abject, wasteful spending that goes on around here. But at a time when we desperately... when we desperately need tough, reasonable Democrats, they're being silenced, shut out, shut down. And the curtains are being pulled back, and it's uncovering many inconvenient truths in Springfield. The Democrat majority here is sending a clear message that if you're a legislator that works hard, tells the truth, asks tough questions about spending when we're in a crisis, and is not religiously driven by identity politics, you're ousted, stripped of important appropriation committee

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

assignments, and not welcome in the new Democrat Party. Let's be honest, guys. Fred Crespo is a good man. He's an honorable man who's being sidelined. He's being sidelined for having the audacity to publicly drop the proverbial F-bomb one too many times. Fiscal sanity, fiscal responsibility, fiscal restraint, those are the things that... that Fred Crespo talks about. Fred and his staff are being silenced for working on an alternative budget that actually takes into account the dire fiscal situation that we're in in this state. But that can't be done because it goes against the official narrative that JB Pritzker and the Democrat majority are propagating, that everything is rainbows and unicorns. It can't be allowed. Commonsense, reasonable principles are clearly no longer allowed in the Democrat Party. The party of the great Jack Kennedy is no longer recognizable. There's no room in the Democrat Party for rational, responsible folks that just want to return to reasonable and have a government that respects the taxpayers and works for the people. Now, Representative Crespo's a Democrat. We don't agree on everything, but he's a good man. He's an honorable man. He's a man that is respected on both sides of the aisle, and he does not deserve the disrespect that's coming his way. So, our message to Fred and many other Democrats over there that I know are personally fed up with the radical direction of the Democrat Party is this: There's room over here. The Republican Party is no longer the party of the country club. The Republican... the new Republican coalition is a party of the working folks. We're the party that puts the interest of the... of the working citizens of Illinois over the special interests and the woke

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

mob. We need more voices of reason here. You guys definitely need more voices of reason. So, join us. Join us, guys. Let's form a new coalition that's going to save this state from the radical forces that are silencing dissent and destroying our state. Thank you."

Speaker Tarver: "Well, speaking of reason, Representative Morgan, what reason do you seek recognition?"

Morgan: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Point of personal privilege, please."

Speaker Tarver: "Please proceed."

Morgan: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And if I could have order of the body. Thank you, Speaker. I stand here today to recognize and celebrate the month of May as Jewish American Heritage Month. And we'll... in the future days, we'll ask the body to adopt House Resolution 294. House Resolution 294 isn't quite ready, but this is to talk about why the month of May will be Jewish American Heritage Month. The Jewish community is a relatively small number of people, even in the State of Illinois where we have one of the largest populations of Jews living outside of Israel. There are only about 300,000 Jews in the State of Illinois or just about 2% of the population. In fact, a number of legislators in this chamber represent districts without even a single Jewish member. So, I stand here recognizing that I am representing a resolution and presenting a resolution for a category of people who are unknown to many in Illinois. I want to use my time here today not to read the resolution that you could find verbatim, but to highlight why I personally carry so much pride in my own Jewish faith. The Jewish community in America has evolved over time in different

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

ethnic, religious, and political movements. We're a product of the diaspora, which is a term that refers to Jews living outside of Israel. And Jews have lived in this state for a really long time. They were part of Illinois society for a quarter century before we were even a state. John Hayes, who settled in Cahokia in 1793, served as the county's postmaster and then was appointed county sheriff. Jewish Illinoisan Joseph Phillips, a veteran of the War of 1812, was named secretary of Illinois Territory in 1817, one year before we, again, were a state. Illinois Jewish residents have dedicated themselves to public service for all people of the state, serving as governors, Representatives, Senators. Notably, we have had more Jewish governors in the State of Illinois than any other state, including, of course, our current governor, JB Pritzker. It's not just in Illinois, though. American Jews have played a significant role in the founding and success of some of the country's most important civil rights organizations, including the NAACP, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. What you might not know... what you might not know is that Judaism prioritizes the fundamental rights and freedoms of others as a core aspect of our faith, of our religion. We are guided by the mission of tikkun olam, to repair the world. The bedrock of Jewish nonprofit organizations are rooted in social justice for all, in both mission and in action. Chicago's Jewish United Fund, here with us today in the gallery, and its network of affiliated agencies serve over 500,000 people from all faiths, races,

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

and ethnicities here in Illinois and elsewhere in the world by working to ensure access to food, shelter, health care, education, and security, as well as support for seniors, individuals with disabilities, refugees, and immigrants. There's the Jewish Council on Urban Affairs, a leading voice for social justice for over 60 years, focusing on fair housing and workers' rights for all. The Anti-Defamation League, an international civil rights organization, founded in 1913 right here in Chicago, that works across the country and here in Illinois to stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment for all. For all. When I think of being a Jewish American, I'm thinking about how my faith demands that I keep those who are less fortunate as my North Star, one of the core principles of what we do here every day in Springfield. I'm thinking about the Friday night Shabbat dinners that I spend with my family where we light candles and reflecting on the long week behind us, as well as the mitzvahs, or good deeds, that await us if we're blessed with another day here on Earth. These traditions are part of the DNA of American Jewish life, synagogues like my own that regularly deliver bagged lunches to food pantries and summer camps where our kids learn to combat both antisemitism and be upstanders against hate directed at all communities. We are perennially aware of our fragile role in society, both that antisemitism is the fastest growing type of hate crime and also that my skin color and a name like Bob Morgan, I can blend in society. I can blend in and avoid some of the harshest realities of our time that most communities that are underrepresented cannot. So, Jewish Americans have been and

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

will always be allies for justice and equality, and I recognize that we are just one small but distinct patch of the beautiful quilt of American society. So, thank you all for indulging me with this time, and I ask that you stand with me in recognizing the important contributions of Jewish Americans throughout our nation's history. Thank you, Mr. Speaker."

Speaker Tarver: "Representative Halbrook, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

Halbrook: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A point of personal privilege, please."

Speaker Tarver: "Please proceed."

Halbrook: "Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, we've all heard and read the reports this morning. We've heard that the Honorable Fred Crespo has been removed from his committee chairmanship, kicked off the Audit Commission, and rumor has it that access to his caucus is up in the air. In this building, we're often engaged in very heated discussions. We disagree, things get partisan and sometimes heated, but let me take a moment and show some bipartisanship. Representative Fred Crespo has a long and honorable service here. While we don't always agree on everything, he believes in the F-word, fiscal responsibility. He believes that we shouldn't just not always be willing to rubber stamp bills, budgets, and appropriations just because they feel good. A state cannot run on vibes, and Crespo has been one of the last lines of defense on the other side of the aisle to respectfully provide checks and balances on spending. I've been glad to serve with him many years on the General Services Appropriations Committee, and to see

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

that the post was stripped from him due to offering up something other than business as usual is disgraceful. We also know that something has happened with a staff member who believes that they were just doing their job. Also, is it coincidence that this person is involved in the movement to unionize Democrat staff? Well, maybe, maybe not. Also, does the name Mary Flowers ring a bell to anyone? This certainly seems like how the last movie started. Is this part two or a sequel? Sometimes there's more going on here. Maybe something will surface that's more political disagreement or questioning authority, which, believe me, we all know gets punished around here. Many of my colleagues have felt this pain, but standing up for what you believe in is always worth it. Many of my colleagues... so, Representative Crespo, if you're standing up for fiscal responsibility, for reason, for discipline in spending, we support you being restored to your positions. Mr. Speaker, I respectfully request a moment of silence for the death of fiscal responsibility. #CrespoStrong. Thank you."

Speaker Tarver: "Denied. Leader Buckner, for what reason do you seek... receive... excuse me, seek recognition? Buckner."

Buckner: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the things about being in the Chair is that you don't get a chance to recognize folks from your district who are here. And so, I get a chance to do that for you today. We got a group from Adam... Adam Clayton Powell School in Chicago, Illinois, on 75th and South Shore in the South Shore community. A group of young people who are bright, brilliant, and show that the future of this... of this

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

state is going in the right direction. Welcome to your Capitol."

Speaker Tarver: "Welcome to the Capitol. Leader Lilly, for what reason do you seek recognition?"

Lilly: "Point of personal privilege."

Speaker Tarver: "Please proceed."

Lilly: "Thank you. I, too, just want to say hello to all of our students who here for Civic Engagement Day. Hello, everyone. We had another group in. Please stand one more time. The West Side is in the House. We have Ella Flagg Young and Douglas Flagg High School, along with the South Side schools as well. Welcome to your Capitol, and we love you."

Speaker Tarver: "On page 5 of the calendar, under Third Readings, we have Senate Bill 1953, offered by Leader Buckner."

Buckner: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker."

Speaker Tarver: "Mr.... sorry. Mr. Clerk, please read the bill."

Clerk Hollman: "Senate Bill 1953, a Bill for an Act concerning local government. Third Reading of this Senate Bill."

Speaker Tarver: "Leader Buckner is recognized."

Buckner: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members of the House, today I rise to present Senate Bill 1953. It's a straightforward, bipartisan, and deeply necessary piece of legislation that strengthens and standardizes the background check process for hiring law enforcement officers across the State of Illinois. This bill does two critical things. First, it ensures that before a final offer is made, any law enforcement agency must require an applicant to sign a written consent form allowing full access to their prior employment records. That includes background investigations, disciplinary findings, and any

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

misconduct. Secondly, it requires previous employers to turn over those records within 14 days and to certify that they haven't withheld anything intentionally or negligently. This is about public trust, agency integrity, and common sense. No one should be hired into law enforcement without a complete picture of their past conduct. Period. Let me be clear: This bill is not anti-police. It's pro-accountability. It's pro-transparency, and it's pro-public safety. It protects not just the communities the officers serve but also the... the honest agencies doing the right thing every day. Departments that comply with this law in good faith are granted legal immunity from lawsuits related to disclosure of these records. This bill also respects due process. Sensitive personal information is redacted. Sealed court records still require judicial permission. Current collective bargaining agreements are honored. But moving forward, CBAs must align with this law. No more contracts that block transparency. This measure passed the Illinois Senate unanimously, and my partner in this work, Senator Turner, is here with us. Democrats and Republicans together came... Democrats and Republicans came together for this. I want this body to know that law enforcement leadership supports this. The Illinois Chiefs Association, the Illinois Sheriffs' Association, the FOP have all slipped in favor of this bill because the best departments want the best officers, and the public deserves nothing less. This bill is not abstract. It's not hypothetical. It's personal. Last July, Sonya Massey, a... last July, Sonya Massey, a 36-year-old Black woman from Springfield, called 911 for help. She believed someone was

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

prowling outside of her home. She should have been protected. Instead, she was shot and killed by a sheriff's deputy who responded to her call. That deputy, Sean Grayson, had bounced between six law enforcement agencies in four years, and he was fired from one. He had multiple red flags in his past, yet he was hired because no one saw the full picture and because the current system does not require it. We're here today to change that. We're here to say that no one should carry a badge without a full and honest review of their record. We're here to say that communities deserve to know that the people protecting them have not... have been completely vetted. And we're here to make sure that what happened to Sonya Massey never happens again, not in Sangamon County, not in Chicago, not in Rockford, Carbondale, or anywhere else in Illinois. Joining us today, Mr. Speaker, in the gallery is the family of Sonya Massey: Donna Massey, her mother; James Wilburn, her father; Sontae Massey; Malachi Hill Massey; Mark Mason; and Ramona Massey-Spaulding. She was a bright light, a young woman who deserves safety, dignity, and respect and whose life was cut short under circumstances that demand scrutiny and accountability. I've spent some time with her family today and looking at her picture and seeing that she has her mother's eyes and her dad's smile, but moreover, that she should be here today. This legislation's a part of our effort to make sure what happened to Sonya never happens again. I ask that we honor the Massey family, not just with our applause, but with our action. I respectfully ask for a 'yes' vote on Senate Bill 1953."

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

Speaker Tarver: "Is there any discussion? Leader Windhorst is recognized."

Windhorst: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the sponsor yield?"

Speaker Tarver: "He indicates that he will."

Windhorst: "Thank you. Leader, I have just a few questions, technical about the bill. Take just a minute. With regard to the sharing of records for police employment, we're changing the amount of time that a previous employer must submit records to the prospective employer from 28 days to 14 days. Is that accurate?"

Buckner: "That is correct."

Windhorst: "Why was that time frame chosen?"

Buckner: "Just after a conversation with law enforcement. What we heard was that there needed to be a quicker, more streamlined process. Many departments, as you know, have a problem with... with hiring. The numbers are low, and they need to get folks into their system that are going to be able to do the job to serve and protect. But that 28 days sometimes created a lag that was not practical in the sense."

Windhorst: "There's ...excuse me. There's also a provision that written directives from the state's attorney may limit disclosure. What is that provision intended to do?"

Buckner: "If there... if there are things that for some reason... and we just want to, once again, game plan out for any possibility of things that may not need to be disclosed or may cause harm to a person or a department or a community based on those... those disclosures. We want to at least give some room for that with the local state's attorneys. We do believe that every... every municipality, every county has a different set

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

of circumstances they're dealing with, which is why we created some... some room in this legislation to deal with that."

Windhorst: "There are also changes in the Counties Code to the sheriff's merit system and those counties which must adopt that system. We produced a population threshold, I believe, to 75,000 residents."

Buckner: "Yeah, but no... but no more than 1 million, yes."

Windhorst: "But no more than 1 million. What is the purpose of that change?"

Buckner: "Yeah, when you look at the state the way it currently is, right, at a... at a million for the implementation and adoption of the ordinance, it leaves a lot of municipalities, towns, villages, places around the State of Illinois out of this... this very useful reform."

Windhorst: "Are you aware if there are any current counties that have a population of greater than 75,000 but less than a million that are not using the sheriff's merit system?"

Buckner: "I'm actually not aware personally of that."

Windhorst: "And as you've described the situation that this bill is intended to address, how do you feel the provisions of this bill will address that situation?"

Buckner: "As I've... I've said this as we... we've worked through this bill, we can't legislate for judgment. If a department decides to hire an officer, even with all of the red flags and the personnel issues that have existed on a person's jacket or personnel file, you know, the public will hold those folks accountable. But what we heard from the Sangamon County Sheriff's Department is that they had no idea that this officer had this sordid past when it came to, you know, use

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

of force and red flags and even being fired from a previous agency. And so, this is intended to create some processes, some protocols, and some procedures that this does not happen in the... in the future."

Windhorst: "And you mentioned this, but just so it... it's clear, the proponents of this bill include the Chiefs of Police and the Sheriffs' Association. Is that accurate?"

Buckner: "That's right. The Chiefs of Police; the Sheriffs' Association, specifically, the Sangamon County Sheriff's Office, which was the... the agency of note in this conversation; the Attorney General's Office; and many more folks who are committed to truth and justice in this space."

Windhorst: "Thank you."

Buckner: "Thank you."

Speaker Tarver: "Representative Tipsword is recognized."

Tipsword: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the sponsor yield?"

Speaker Tarver: "Indicates that he will."

Tipsword: "Leader Buckner, I appreciate all your work on this very difficult bill you've been working on for quite some time. I... and I do appreciate your work on that. I've got just a couple of questions that haven't already been asked. Is there any change in this as far as when employment... past employment history is being looked at how far back, where that threshold is, how many years back in the past we have to go?"

Buckner: "There is not. If a person was employed with a law enforcement agency 20 years ago that will still be a part of this record. There... there is none of that here."

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

Tipsword: "Okay. So, any... any employment with a previous law enforcement agency, no matter how far back, would... would be looked at. Okay."

Buckner: "That is correct."

Tipsword: "How about in the private sector?"

Buckner: "So, the... the way the bill is written, it... it does also give them the ability to look back into the private sector as well. Based on our conversations with... with law enforcement, we added that in, in order to give them the space to... to do that. When I think from a practical standpoint, what people are wanting to... to uncover in this process is whether or not there were egregious things that happened in law enforcement agencies."

Tipsword: "And to another topic, as far as previous employers not getting back to the... the hiring, the agency trying to hire, I understand and I see in the bill that there is an avenue for the hiring agency to... to file in court to get those records. But I still have a problem, just like we do now, if someone doesn't comply, at what point in time, you know... we may have a good applicant. We may have a good candidate. But if one private agency or one law enforcement agency doesn't get back to us that person doesn't get in the door. So, I... I'm concerned about that, and... and is there any... was there any thought in that at all?"

Buckner: "Yep. Well, we talked about that. And to Leader Windhorst's earlier question, part of the reason that we truncated the timeline from 28 to 14 days is that it... it will become pretty evident pretty early on in the process if someone is going to choose not to comply, right? And then

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

there are obviously triggers in... in the bill to deal with that, ways to compel the information, and ways for the law enforcement agency to get that information themselves. I understand, I think, your consternation in that space, and we had the same, which is why we... we tailored this, this way."

Tipsword: "Okay. I... I also noticed in there a new stipulation is a credit check. And I'm curious as to why that is, and is there a... a threshold that an applicant would have to meet with a credit score to be allowed to be a police officer?"

Buckner: "Yeah, that was something that was negotiated in the... in the other chamber with... with the... with law enforcement. The way the bill is written, there... there is no threshold. This doesn't tell folks that you can't hire somebody because X, Y, or Z. It just makes all of the relevant information available."

Tipsword: "Okay. So, it wouldn't... all right. It wouldn't keep an applicant from being hired. It would just be information the agency would have."

Buckner: "That is correct."

Tipsword: "Okay. Well, again, leader, I... I appreciate your work on this. I... I know what you are trying to do. I... I don't know that this language gets you there, and I have some concerns with that. I... I was... I was a 'no' in committee, and I'm probably still going to be a 'no.' I would... I'd love to talk to you more about it, you know, for other things we can do. But as it is, I still have some reservations, but I... but I appreciate your work on it."

Buckner: "Thank you, Representative."

Speaker Tarver: "Chair recognizes Leader Buckner to close."

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

Buckner: "Folks, this is, to me, very simple. As I said, this passed with unanimous consent in the Senate. This is something that is long overdue in the way that we operate within this state. No other family should have to suffer what the Massey family is suffering here today and what they have suffered since July. I urge a 'aye' vote."

Speaker Tarver: "The question is, 'Shall Senate Bill 1953 pass?' All in favor vote 'aye'; all opposed vote 'nay.' The voting is open. Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Mr. Clerk, please take the record. On this question, there are 101 voting in 'favor,' 12 voting 'against,' none voting 'present.' This bill, having received the constitutional majority, is hereby... is hereby declared passed. The Chair recognizes Leader Mah for the purpose of an announcement."

Mah: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Democrats would request a caucus after adjournment, 10 minutes after adjournment, in Room 114."

Speaker Tarver: "Democrats will caucus in Room 114 at 1:15. Leader Keicher is recognized for the purpose of an announcement."

Keicher: "Mr. Speaker, thank you. I haven't had a chance to check the schedule for any afternoon committees. Do we expect any starting delays on any activities this afternoon, and if so, approximately how long?"

Speaker Tarver: "There will be no committees this afternoon, Leader Keicher."

Keicher: "Okay. Thank you."

Speaker Tarver: "Mr. Clerk, Agreed Resolutions."

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

Clerk Hollman: "Agreed Resolutions. House Resolution 337, offered by Representative Hammond. House Resolution 338, offered by Representative Didech. House Resolution 339, offered by Representative Barbara Hernandez. House Resolution 341, offered by Representative Cassidy. And House Resolution 343, offered by Representative Halbbrook."

Speaker Tarver: "Leader Gabel moves for the adoption of the Agreed Resolutions. All those in favor say 'aye'; all opposed say 'nay.' In the opinion of the Chair, the 'ayes' have it. And the Agreed Resolutions are adopted. And now, allowing perfunctory time for the clerk, Leader Gabel moves that the House stand adjourned until Friday, May 16, at the hour of noon. All those in favor... favor say 'aye'; all the opposed say 'nay.' In the opinion of the Chair, the 'ayes' have it. And the House stands adjourned."

Clerk Hollman: "House Perfunctory Session will come to order. Introduction and First Reading of House Bills. House Bill 4055, offered by Representative Weaver, a Bill for an Act concerning regulation. House Bill 4056, offered by Representative McCombie... by Leader McCombie, a Bill for an Act concerning public aid. First Reading of these House Bills. Introduction and First Readings of Senate Bills. Senate Bill 324, offered by Speaker Welch, a Bill for an Act concerning children. Senate Bill 1298, offered by Representative Barbara Hernandez, a Bill for an Act concerning public aid. Senate Bill 2303, offered by Representative Hoffman, a Bill for an Act concerning regulation. Senate Bill 2469, offered by Representative Ryan, a Bill for an Act concerning criminal law. First Reading of these Senate Bills. There being no

STATE OF ILLINOIS
104th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

45th Legislative Day

5/15/2025

further business, the House Perfunctory Session will stand adjourned."