



QUAD CITIES CHAMBER

Illinois Capitol Trip

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Mid-Income Housing Credit – SB 1926/1927



Governor Pritzker has repeatedly emphasized the need to significantly increase housing production through his BUILD proposal and the September 2024 ad-hoc committee report, which found that Illinois lacks a coordinated strategy to address housing shortages for households earning 80–140% of Area Median Income - the “missing middle.”

In the Quad Cities, our upcoming inclusion in the River Edge Redevelopment Zone (RERZ) program is a major step toward correcting the development imbalance that currently favors Iowa. SB 1926/1927 could be an additional tool to take the program to another level by enabling the development of middle-income housing at scale.

Bill Highlights:

- Strengthen the RERZ incentive stack, improving Illinois-side competitiveness
- Apply to both redevelopment and new construction projects
- Provide a 10% construction subsidy for up to \$200,000 per unit (max \$20,000 per unit, \$1 million per project)
- Cap construction costs at \$300,000 per unit to ensure affordability for middle-income households
- Establish a \$10 million, one-time pilot program, administered by IHDA
- Distribute funds to RERZ municipalities through project-specific development agreements, ensuring fast and accountable deployment
- Preserve local control and flexibility for municipalities negotiating projects

If passed, this credit would provide RERZ communities across Illinois with a proven, market-based tool that will help grow our economy, strengthen our community and provide affordable housing options for hardworking Illinois families.

Request: Support SB 1926 and SB 1927.

Passenger Rail Planning Act – SB 3285/HB 4279



In 2025, the General Assembly approved funding for the Chicago-Moline Passenger Rail project, a long-standing priority for the Quad Cities. With funding now authorized, the State must ensure the project moves quickly and efficiently to deliver the full economic return on that investment. While we hope to see passenger trains in Moline soon, this project is part of a larger economic development strategy that will require comprehensive statewide and regional planning to maximize the benefits.

Approved in 2021, the Midwest Regional Rail Plan shows the Quad Cities as a critical western hub connecting Chicago to Moline, Iowa City, Des Moines and Omaha. This connection would be highly valuable to each of these cities, but significant additional planning is needed to turn this idea into a reality.

Bill Highlights:

- Requires clear reporting and accountability from the government
- Establishes defined service frequency targets and aligns targets with Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)
- Coordinates efforts between IDOT and MPOs to identify rail investment opportunities proactively
- Coordinates applications with MPOs for federal or multistate funding opportunities

Proactive planning for rail expansion and transparency in data and reporting are critical steps to the future success of regional passenger rail service. We are hopeful that the Passenger Rail Planning Act will pass, positioning the Quad Cities as part of a coordinated statewide and regional rail strategy.

Request: Support the Passenger Rail Planning Act

Tipped Wage Credit Elimination – HB 2982



Legislation has emerged again proposing the elimination of the Tipped Wage Credit in Illinois. While the intent is to improve worker compensation and protection, the combined effect of these provisions could negatively impact take-home wages for current employees and destabilize an already fragile sector.

The effects of eliminating the tip credit in Chicago have proven disastrous. According to a survey of 300 restaurants in Chicago, 84% of restaurants have increased menu prices, 69% have cut employee hours, and 62% have reduced the number of employees as a result of the minimum tipped wage increase in July of 2024.

If applied to the Quad Cities, these impacts could cause customers to opt instead to visit out-of-state restaurants, forcing more Illinois restaurants to close their doors and damaging economic development efforts.

Eliminating the tip credit risks reducing jobs, lowering earnings for workers, raising prices for consumers, losing small, independent restaurants. We should focus on protecting workers without undermining the businesses that employ them.

Request: Oppose elimination of the Tipped Wage Credit

Border Community Zones – SB 4030



Border communities in Illinois compete every day with the promise of other states' lower taxes and lighter regulatory environments. In our region, this has unfortunately resulted in Illinois communities losing population and investment while the Iowa side continues to grow.

Although the River Edge Redevelopment Zone program will be a game changer for East Moline, Moline and Rock Island, we frequently see small communities struggle to keep up with the costs and demands of modern development, often leading major projects to locate in other communities or out of state entirely. Border Community Zones could be part of the solution.

SB 4030 is a smart, targeted proposal that would allow communities within 10 miles of a state border to apply for border community status. If granted, these communities could access proven economic development incentives like those in the RERZ program, such as:

- Investment credits
- Construction jobs credits
- Sales tax exemptions on building materials
- Property tax abatements

This proposal recognizes the challenges that border communities in Illinois regularly face and offers a responsible, effective tool to retain and expand local jobs and investment.

Request: Support SB 4030

Community College Baccalaureate Degree - SB 2482



Illinois community colleges are critical partners in meeting our workforce needs and maintain strong partnerships with industry leaders who rely on them to deliver a skilled, job-ready workforce.

As our businesses continue to evolve and require more 4-year preparation, Community College Baccalaureate authority represents a practical, workforce-driven solution that strengthens the talent pipeline, advances incumbent workers and supports Illinois' economic competitiveness.

Bill Highlights:

- Keeps community colleges affordable by requiring that programs be financially self-sustaining and not charge more than 150% of their current tuition and fees for upper-division coursework.
- Community colleges would be allowed to launch new baccalaureate programs only when they can demonstrate clear local workforce demand and student need through formal feasibility studies. All proposed degrees would be subject to rigorous review and approval by both the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) and the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE).
- Community colleges must work formally with nearby universities first to see if partnerships can meet workforce needs before proposing a new bachelor's program.
- Expands access to applied bachelor's degrees for working and low-income students by offering flexible, high-demand programs designed to fit work and family responsibilities. Colleges must demonstrate how programs will expand access to students who are unlikely to pursue a degree.
- Avoids unnecessary duplication and limits expansion by requiring strong justification for overlapping programs, capping the number of baccalaureate degrees and maintaining targeted limits—while preserving flexibility for high-demand technical fields not currently offered regionally.

Request: Support Community College Baccalaureate Degree Authority in Illinois