



UNIVERSITY  
OF ILLINOIS  
SYSTEM

OFFICE OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS  
AND COMMUNICATIONS

GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023



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## **Introduction**

The following report covers work conducted by the University of Illinois System's Office of Governmental Relations, part of External Relations and Communications (ERC), during the 2023fiscal year.

## **ERC Mission**

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

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

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## State Relations

### 2023 Illinois State Legislative Session Budget Summary and Priority Bill List

#### Appropriations

##### SB250 - Operating Budget (Sims/Gordon-Booth)

- **Public universities increased \$82.9 million or 6.8% over FY23. The increase provided is 7% on base operating lines along with some increases in legislative initiatives.**
- **Total U of I System increase of \$42.5 million +6.5% to \$697.8 million and includes increases of 2.5% for Prairie Research Institute, +7.3% for Hispanic Center of Excellence, +2.5% for Dixon Springs Agricultural Center, +2.5% for PPI, +2.5% for Dentistry, and +45.8% for Labor and Employment Relations.**
- Maintained level funding for the University of Illinois Hospital (\$40,380,600), Illinois Innocence Project (\$3 million), University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) Climate Jobs Institute (\$2 million) and Illinois Heart Rescue (\$500,000).
- University of Illinois Chicago (UIC) College of Pharmacy Rockford (Rural Pharmacy Program) \$500,000 appropriation from the General Professions Dedicated Fund remains as well as the special fund appropriations related to the Surveys.
- Fire Services Fund is intended to reflect the statutory amounts for regular operation and for the Cornerstone Training program; the budget includes the statutory amount of \$5,671.2 thousand.
- The other special funds (Pet Population Control & Hazardous Waste Research Fund) remain appropriated at the FY23 level.
- **MAP funding increases by \$100.0 million**, or +16.6% over FY23 to \$701.6 million. \$2 million increase for FY23 also included in the bill.
- **AIM High funding increases by \$15 million** or +42.9% over FY23 to \$50.0 million. All other ISAC funding for statewide grants are shown below. **BIMP change to increase the household income to eight times the poverty guidelines (up from six times).**
- SURS is at the certified amount of \$2.13 billion. FY23 additional funding increased from \$38.8 million to \$77.5 million.

#### Tuition

- Consistent with GOMB requirement for tuition submission with budget request materials, the system submitted an inflation placeholder for tuition which is included in the appendix of the recommendation. The budget recommendations do not include tuition data by university.

#### Capital Budget

- All projects reappropriated. New funding of \$25 million for grant to CZ Biohub Chicago LLC to DCEO.

#### Statewide Grants

- There continues to be no funding for Illinois Veterans Grants and Illinois National Guard Grants through ISAC. Funding has not been provided since FY10.
- All other ISAC general funds grants would as follows:
  - Minority Teachers of Illinois increase of \$3.8 million to \$8.0 million (+90.5%);
  - Dependent grants \$1.3 million (+2.1%)
  - Teacher Loan Repayment Program increase of \$535,100 to \$975,000 (+121.6%);

- Golden Apple Scholarship increase of \$4.25 million to \$10.75 million (+65.4%);
- Golden Apple Accelerators Program increase of \$4.25 million to \$5.0 million (+56.7%);
- Veterans' Home Nurse Loan Repayment \$26,400 (at FY23 level);
- Nurse Educator Loan Repayment \$500,000 (at FY23 level);
- Exonerated Persons Grants \$150,000 (at FY23 level);
- Community Behavioral Health Care Provider Loan Repayment Program \$5 million (at FY23 level);
- Social Worker Scholarships and loan repayment \$6.0 million (at FY23 level);
- Teacher Reimbursement Program \$2.0 million eliminated;
- NDIGO Foundation Grant increase \$50,000 to \$550,000 (+10.0%);
- **New funding of \$10.0 million for the Prepare for Illinois' Future Program;**
- **New funding of \$2.0 million for the IGROW Tech Scholarship Program.**
- IBHE grant programs:
  - DFI increase of \$68,700 (+3.5%) to \$2.05 million.
  - Grow Your Own increase of \$3.5 million to \$6.0 million (+143.3%);
  - Nursing School Grants increase of \$750,000 to \$1.5 million (+100.0%);
  - Nurse Educator Fellowships increase of \$400,000 to \$800,000 (+100.0%);
  - University Center of Lake County, Creating Pathways and Access for Student Success, Quad Cities Graduate Study Center, MyCreditsTransfer, Cooperative Work Study Grants, Stem -IMSA Fusion Program, Higher Education Assessment in the Quad Cities, and Common Application are all funded at FY23 levels;
  - Mental Health Early Action on Campus increase of \$1.04 million to \$3.38 million for public universities;
  - **New funding of \$2.0 million for Ending Student Housing Insecurities;**
  - **New funding of \$3.0 million for grants to universities with 55% or more PELL students;**
  - Mental Health Grants for Community Colleges totaling \$9.2 million (+2.6 million or +38.4%).
- IBHE general funds operational support increases by \$300,600 (+10.6%), strategic planning funding increase of \$10,000 (+4.0%); funding increase of \$15,300 (+4.0%) to \$397,100 for the ILDS (Illinois Longitudinal Data System).

### Other

- \$361,700 appropriated to the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation for costs associated with the operation of the Office of Real Estate Research at the University of Illinois (+964%);
- Fire Explorer-Cadet School program is increased by \$15,000 to \$80,000 through the Office of the State Fire Marshall (+23.1%);
- DHFS - University of Illinois Hospital Services Fund \$375 million included at FY23 level;
- Department of Public Health: U of I Sickle-Cell Clinic Grant remains at FY23 level of \$483,900;
- The U of I DSCC Grant remains at the FY23 level of \$9.million through the Department of Public Health;
- New to the Secretary of State for library Open Education Resources \$3.0 million.

### **HB3817 – Budget Implementation Act (BIMP)**

Below are two notable items in the BIMP that will benefit the U of I System

- An exemption for each state public institution of higher education from submitting a detailed travel voucher to the Office of the Comptroller. However, we are still required to keep all receipts specified in the applicable travel regulations and will annually publish a record of these expenditures.
- Eligibility for students to be able to receive an AIM High scholarship increased from six times the federal poverty level to eight times the federal poverty level. This will allow more of our students to take advantage of these scholarship dollars.

## **Substantive Legislation**

### **HB301** – Makes AIM High Permanent (Stuart/Halpin)

*Passed Both Houses*

Initially passed as a pilot program, the bicameral, bipartisan Higher Education Working Group worked to make the AIM High scholarship program permanent. The legislation also increased the required school match for universities with at least 49% of PELL eligible students to increase institutional match from 20% to 35%. The institutional match for universities that have fewer than 49% of PELL eligible students increases from 60% to 70%.

### **HB1378** – GROW Illinois Incentive Program (Yang Rohr/Cervantes)

*Passed both Houses*

Commissions ISAC to create a scholarship program for in-state students attending public institutions majoring in computer science or information technology-related fields.

### **HB2878** – Higher ed regulatory relief (Hoffman/Castro)

*Passed both Houses*

This legislation contained three regulatory reforms for higher education:

- Certificates of Participation – Allow public institutions of higher education 30 years (now 10) to enter contracts for financing or refinancing of property. Will provide greater flexibility to tackle backlog of deferred maintenance and will provide opportunity to advance needed improvements to facilities across the state. Will help with credit upgrades for our state public institutions.
- Energy performance contracts are exempt from the Illinois Procurement Code and instead follow 110ILCS 62 – Relieve confusion and administrative challenges by directing energy contracts to fall under the Public University Conservation Act alone. Will not impact any other statutes noted in the 110ILCS62.
- Exemption for advertising when sold directly from the station or owner for distribution of advertising on their privately held companies – Relieve administrative burdens by exempting going through a procurement mechanism for a guaranteed result. This amendment will not impact the public institutions' ability to engage new or previously unused sources of advertising.

### **HB3413** – NAGPRA (Walker/Pacione-Zayas)

*Passed both Houses*

This legislation created emergency rulemaking to provide for the expeditious and timely return of Native American remains. It also dedicated state land for the burial of these remains. We worked closely with DNR and the advocates to show that UIUC is a leader in this field.

### **HB3759** – Higher Ed Recruitment (Stuart/Halpin)

*Passed both Houses*

This was an initiative of the public universities to make it easier to recruit in-state students. It will allow public institutions to get data about high school students so we can recruit them earlier.

### **SB89** – Extends the collegiate sports betting sunset an additional year/UIC Water Rate Study fix (Hilton/Rita)

*Passed both Houses*

This omnibus bill extended the ban on instate collegiate sports betting for an additional year at the request of UIUC's Department of Intercollegiate Athletics. After several discussions with legislators involved in gaming,

we agreed we needed more time to discuss any additional changes to in-state collegiate sports betting. Additionally, the legislation included language to extend the due date of a Water Rate Study.

**SB1646 – Non-solicitation in deferred compensation plans (Martwick/Kifowit)**

*Passed both Houses*

As initially filed, SB1646 had an unintended consequence of preventing recordkeeping promotion services intended to enhance retirement savings opportunities, specifically services for student loan forgiveness assistance that are critical to enabling higher education faculty and staff to direct more savings to supplemental retirement plans. The state relations team worked with the House and Senate sponsors to allow record keepers the ability to promote specific value-added services.



## Federal Relations

The following section provides an overview of ERC's federal achievements and milestones from July 2022 - June 2023.

### **FEDERAL ENGAGEMENT & PROFILE-RAISING ACTIVITIES**

In January 2023, President Killeen was joined by over 200 alumni and Illinois Connection advocates for a virtual town hall where he shared the U of I System's federal accomplishments and priorities. [View town hall video.](#)

The federal team organized, facilitated, and staffed over 40 meetings and events with members of Congress to grow awareness of, engage with and advocate for the great work of the system.

### **Demonstrated U of I System Leadership in the Nation's Capital**

The U of I System provided technical expertise to Congress through testimony during committee hearings.

- UIUC's Emily Edwards [testified](#) before the House Science, Space and Technology Committee during a hearing that focused on quantum technology and workforce development. Dr. Edwards testified in her role as executive director of UIUC's Illinois Quantum Information Science and Technology Center (IQUIST).
- UIC's Dr. Stuart Jay Olshansky testified at a House Science, Space and Technology Committee hearing titled "The Fountain of Youth? The Quest for Aging Therapies."

### *Supported "Fly-Ins" of Various U of I System Stakeholders*

In conjunction with the ERC advocacy team, the federal team coordinated an annual day of advocacy in the nation's capital. President Killeen was joined by system leadership, all three chancellors, alums and students for the 2023 U of I System Day in D.C. The day included [breakfast](#) with Sen. Dick Durbin, a fireside [chat](#) with Sen. Tammy Duckworth and a full day of meetings with Illinois and alumni legislators, culminating in an evening reception on Capitol Hill. Roughly 45 advocates took part in the fly-in, the first in-person U of I System Day in D.C. since the inaugural event in 2019. In their meetings, they focused on the importance of boosting funding for both Pell Grants and federal R&D.

Additionally, the federal team helped coordinate and staff congressional meetings for U of I System faculty taking part in "fly-ins" or D.C. meetings:

1. UIUC faculty and graduate students participated in the annual "Fusion Day on the Hill" to discuss the importance of fusion energy research and highlight funding needs for the upcoming fiscal year with congressional staff.
2. Faculty from UIUC's Department of Nuclear, Plasma & Radiological Engineering met with Illinois delegation offices to discuss our nuclear engineering programs and funding requests for FY24.
3. System faculty members and an undergraduate student affiliated with the Humanities Research Institute participated in meetings with Illinois delegation offices as part of the annual Humanities Advocacy Day.
4. UIUC faculty participated in an advocacy day to ask Illinois delegation offices for increased

- funding for international education programs, including Title VI and Fulbright-Hays.
5. UIUC Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation Susan Martinis led a delegation of hypersonics faculty in D.C. meetings with senior officials at the Pentagon, staff for the Senate Armed Services Committee and Sen. Duckworth.
6. Randy Sandone from UIUC's Critical Infrastructure Resilience Institute met with Rep. Nikki Budzinski staff to provide updates on resilience in emergency communications and 5G.
7. Representatives from the Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant met with three Illinois delegation offices to share how their NOAA-funded work contributes to a healthy environment and economy in the southern Lake Michigan region.
8. Dean Peter Constable and Professor Devon Hague from the UIUC College of Veterinary Medicine [met](#) with Rep. Budzinski and congressional staff to advocate for rural veterinarian programs in Illinois.
9. UIUC VCRI Susan Martinis and system VPEDI Jay Walsh [updated](#) Rep. Bill Foster on the U of I System's research enterprise and priorities. Dr. Walsh also met with Rep. Budzinski.
10. University of Illinois Springfield (UIS) child welfare advocates Dr. Betsy Goulet and Dr. Amy Wheeler met with staff from Rep. Budzinski's office to discuss childhood welfare intervention programs and UIS efforts to train the next generation of frontline social service providers.
11. University of Illinois Extension professionals and stakeholders participated in the annual Public Issues Leadership Development (PILD) Conference and conducted a full day of Hill meetings.
12. Associate Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs Advocacy and Government Relations Emily Gibellina conducted a day of Hill meetings to advocate for UI Health priorities.
13. Leadership from UIUC's College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences (ACES) participated in a two-day marathon of Hill meetings to discuss agriculture priorities and provide recommendations for the 2023 Farm Bill.
14. University of Illinois Cancer Center Director Jan Kitajewski took part in the American Association of Cancer Institutes (AACI) Hill Day to advocate for increased funding for NIH and the National Cancer Institute.
15. UIUC's Dr. Andrew Leakey [participated](#) in meetings with House and Senate appropriations committees to advocate for the Department of Energy's Bioenergy Research Centers (BRCs).

Several U of I System administrators and faculty members participated in panel discussions or spoke at briefings. For example:

1. UIC Interim Chancellor Javier Reyes took part in a Department of Education summit focused on ensuring equitable student success in higher education. He spoke on a panel that explored long-term solutions for college affordability.
2. UIUC Professor Naira Hovakimyan presented at an in-person congressional briefing on an Advanced Air Mobility project she leads that is sponsored by NASA through its University Leadership Initiative program. She also met separately with staff from the offices of Senators Durbin and Duckworth and Rep. Rodney Davis.
3. UIUC's Jennifer Fraterrigo took part in a White House Office of Science and Technology Policy forum on campus and community-scale climate change solutions.
4. UIC Interim Chancellor Reyes met with White House officials, including the director of the

Office of Science and Technology Policy, and members of Congress as part of a delegation representing the Alliance of Hispanic-Serving Research Universities.

*President's Executive Leadership Program D.C. Seminar*

During a visit to Washington, D.C., the federal team coordinated meetings for the 2022-23 fellows in the [President's Executive Leadership Program](#). The fellows, joined by President Killeen and Executive Vice President Nick Jones, met with Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, Department of Education Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education Nasser Paydar, national academic association presidents Ted Mitchell and Mark Becker, NIH Deputy Director Susan Monarez, White House Fellow Lav Varshney, Illinois Congressional delegation members Darin LaHood, Jonathan Jackson and Raja Krishnamoorthi and DHS Associate Director Vania Lockett, OSTP Principal Deputy Director Kei Koizumi, and an extensive panel of NSF officials and leadership to discuss pressing issues in higher education.

## **Campus/In-District Activities**

U of I System faculty and staff engaged with federal legislators and agency officials on our campuses to highlight our work on important issues.

1. UI Health and the U of I System Office of Procurement Diversity partnered with Congressman Danny Davis to host a Diversity Healthcare Expo. The event connected diverse business owners who wish to provide their products and services with healthcare providers serving the Chicagoland area.
2. Sen. Duckworth visited UI Health Mile Square Health Center to discuss enacted legislation to reduce prescription drug prices.
3. Rep. Krishnamoorthi joined the system's state tour, which involved a roundtable discussion with Enclave Academy, Illinois High School District 214, and Harper College.
4. Rep. Budzinski met with leadership from UIUC's The Grainger College of Engineering and the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences. The congresswoman also visited Urbana's Research Park, the ADM Science and Technology Center and the RIPE facility and greenhouse.
5. Rep. Budzinski joined an AgTech breakfast at UIUC's Research Park, which included participants from campus, industry, and other elected officials.
6. Sen. Durbin spoke at UIC Law about restorative justice.
7. UI Health joined other Chicago hospitals at a press conference held by Sen. Durbin to unveil a report on the HEAL initiative, which addresses gun violence.
8. UIS Chancellor Janet Gooch moderated Rep. Budzinski's first town hall meeting with constituents in Springfield.

## **PROMOTED U OF I SYSTEM LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES**

The federal team continued to advance the U of I System's [priorities for the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress](#).

***Below are some highlights of the major issues the federal team worked on:***

1. **Student Financial Aid**
  - a. The federal team continued strong advocacy efforts to double the maximum Pell Grant award, including updating its ["Double Pell" booklet](#) with new student testimonials we received through a call-to-action.
2. **Science/Research**
  - a. In August 2022, President Biden signed into law the CHIPS and Science Act, legislation ERC advocated for which includes funding for semiconductor R&D and workforce development. Since it was enacted, the federal team has been engaging the universities as provisions are implemented and funding opportunities emerge.
3. **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**
  - a. The federal team continued to provide a leading role in government relations support for the Alliance of Hispanic Serving Research Universities, a consortium of Hispanic-Serving Institutions with R1 classification. UIC is a founding member of the consortium.
    - i. ERC worked with Rep. Chuy Garcia's office to lead a "Dear Colleague" letter to House appropriators requesting \$20 million in funding for a

new pilot program at the Department of Education to increase Hispanic PhDs. The final letter garnered 18 signatures.

#### **4. Immigration**

- a. Throughout the year, federal relations participated in regular immigration- focused calls and strategy sessions with our higher education associations (AAU, APLU) to stay informed and strategize on advocacy.
- b. UIUC Chancellor Robert Jones joined other members of the steering committee of the Presidents Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration in sending a [letter](#) urging Senate leaders to pass legislation before the end of the year to protect DACA recipients and Dreamers. Paul Weinberger joined a strategy session that the Presidents Alliance held as part of a D.C. fly-in to advocate for the legislation. The system also [participated](#) in a related social media effort.

#### **5. Budget/Appropriations**

- a. As part of the U of I System’s advocacy for the annual appropriations process, ERC develops programmatic requests, appropriations plus-ups and report language to advance specific line items in the federal budget that support our missions. Throughout March and April 2023, ERC submitted the [U of I System’s FY 2024 programmatic requests](#) to the Illinois congressional delegation.
- b. The federal team developed and submitted FY23 and FY24 requests for funding and/or report language. For FY23, the U of I System was successful in securing \$34.5 million in plus-ups for seven U of I requests and \$5.6 million for five U of I congressionally directed spending/community project funding requests. While the FY24 appropriations process is still underway, to date members of Congress have selected six U of I System earmark requests totaling \$5.36 million.
- c. Additionally, ERC encouraged members of the Illinois delegation to sign onto “Dear Colleague” letters supporting some of the top agencies that fund our campuses—the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, the Department of Energy Office of Science, and the Department of Agriculture’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Several Illinois members sent their own letters to appropriators expressing support for funding and report language. Below are some outcomes:
  - i. Eight Illinois members signed onto a letter supporting [National Science Foundation](#) funding: Reps. Budzinski, Sean Casten, Danny Davis, Bill Foster, Jonathan Jackson, Krishnamoorthi, LaHood, and Jan Schakowsky.
  - ii. Five Illinois members supported [Title VI](#) (International Education): Reps. Davis, Foster, Schakowsky, Robin Kelly, and Jackson.
  - iii. Seven Illinois members supported [Ag Research Infrastructure](#): Reps. Davis, Budzinski, Casten, Jackson, Chuy Garcia, Mike Bost, and Eric Sorensen.
  - iv. Five Illinois members supported the Department of Education HSI Pilot Program: Reps. Garcia, Schakowsky, Foster, Krishnamoorthi, and Davis.



## **Local Relations**

### ***Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce - May and July 2022***

In alignment with IHCC's mission to cultivate knowledge, connections, and collaboration to effect transformational social change and achieve sustainable economic impact through entrepreneurship, the U of I System served as a sponsor for the IHCC breakfast event, and many representatives from across the system participated, including alumni. The event was followed by a meeting with the U of I System's procurement team and CEO Jaime Di Paulo and their teams to discuss collaborations to review tangible ways, including research and policy, to remove barriers for diverse and small business owners across Illinois.

### ***Illinois Legislative Black Caucus Foundation – October 2022 and July 2023***

The U of I System was honored to sponsor and participate in the 2023 Illinois Legislative Black Caucus Foundation Summer Scholarship & Golfing outing and fall conference and gala in Chicago. We were honored also celebrate a historic time as the ILBCF celebrated 55 years and the foundation 20 years of service. We're proud to collaborate on our shared mission to impact the lives of students and communities across Illinois.

### ***Discovery Partners Institute – ongoing***

- In September 2022, Gov. J.B. Pritzker spoke at Discovery Partners Institute (DPI) to help unveil the design of the new DPI Building to be built in The 78, a new neighborhood just south of Chicago's Loop.
- In December 2022, it was announced that DPI would be working with the State of Illinois and the City of Chicago to create a Cannabis Research Institute.
- In January 2023, IDPH worked with DPI to create a statewide COVID tracker.
- In February 2023, DPI and the Chicago Department of Public Health announced a \$2.3 million contract to test wastewater for various diseases. This work is being done in conjunction with partners at UIC, Argonne and Northwestern.
- In April 2023, DPI and the Chicago Public Schools announced a partnership to bring high school students to DPI for enriching field trip workshops.

## Advocacy in Action

### ***Reception for Senate President Don Harmon- September 7, 2022***

September 7: As a part of the 2022 U of I Leadership State Tour we hosted a reception for Senate President Don Harmon in President Harmon's district. There were brief remarks and time for networking with our U of I System leaders, including UIC Interim Chancellor Javier Reyes, UIS Chancellor Janet Gooch, and UIUC Chancellor Robert Jones, as well as community leaders and U of I alumni.

### ***U of I System Annual Chicago Alumni in Government Reception- September 13, 2022***

September 13: The U of I system hosted our annual Chicago Alumni in Government event as the last event of the 2022 State Tour. Over 200 alumni from the Chicago area attended and heard from system leadership.

### ***Call To Action: Pell Grants- November 11, 2022***

November 11: We asked our students who were recipients of the Pell Grant to share how the Pell Grant made a difference in their life. Their stories were shared with members of Congress, their staff, and other stakeholders to highlight the importance of doubling the maximum Pell Grant award. We also created a print piece where stakeholders could [read more about how Pell has made a difference in our student's lives](#).

### ***New Members of the Illinois General Assembly Conference- November 28, 2022***

November 28: The U of I System and IGPA hosted the New Member Conference, which allowed our leadership an opportunity to meet and present to the new members of the General Assembly before they took office.

### ***Coffee with Killeen: Federal Priorities- January 20, 2023***

January 20: Illinois Connection hosted another "Coffee with Killeen: Federal Priorities," which was a conversation about how the system's federal agenda fared in 2023. The town hall also included a Q&A session with President Killeen. [View "Coffee with Killeen: Federal Priorities."](#)

### ***University of Illinois System Day at the Capitol- February 22, 2023***

February 22: The U of I System held the kick-off meeting of our University of Illinois Caucus, of which there are 64 members, and then hosted the 14th Annual U of I Day in the Capitol, where we had around 200 alumni, students, faculty and staff come to Springfield and advocate for the system and discuss the importance of funding for Illinois public higher education and the U of I System. That evening we hosted a reception at the Wyndham Hotel with U of I System alumni working in government, along with elected officials and staff. We also had a virtual call to action for those unable to join in person. We had 428 emails sent to legislators in support of our message.

### ***University of Illinois System Day in D.C.- April 19, 2023***

April 19: The U of I System held the 2023 University of Illinois System Day in D.C. where our leadership, alumni, and students met members of Congress and their staff throughout the day to advocate for the U of I System's federal priorities.

April 19: We hosted a reception in Washington, D.C., where members of Congress and staff were invited to join President Killeen, system leadership, and alumni to celebrate the U of I System and thank our congressional champions.

### ***Coffee with Killeen-State Priorities- April 21, 2023***

April 21: “Coffee with Killeen: State Priorities” served as another virtual effort to drive home the importance of investing in the U of I System. The conversation focused on the need for our state to invest in Illinois public universities, and President Killeen answered questions from attendees. [View “Coffee with Killeen: State Priorities.”](#)

### ***Virtual Town Hall on Race Relations and Student Mental Health- May 1, 2023***

May 1: The U of I System joined the other public Illinois universities and Rep. La Shawn Ford to host a virtual town hall on race relations and student mental health. This was a conversation about discrimination, race relations, and their impact on student mental health. The event aimed to inform students about resources to address the discrimination around intersecting identities and to ensure all students are seen, heard, and valued at each of our universities. The webinar included a question-and-answer session where students could ask about available resources.

### ***Illinois Public Universities Higher Education Reception- May 3, 2023***

May 3: The U of I System joined the other Illinois public universities and hosted the Illinois Public Universities Higher Education Reception in Springfield. In addition to university leadership, alumni association leaders and our guests, we also invited all members of the ILGA. Gov. Pritzker was our keynote speaker and highlighted the importance of higher education to our state and its role in his vision for the future needs of Illinois residents. In addition to the governor, we were thrilled to have Lt. Gov. (and U of I alumna) Juliana Stratton attend as well as the Deputy Governor for Education (and U of I alumnus) Martin Torres attend.

### ***Call-to-Action Budget Increase for Higher Education- May 9, 2023***

May 9: March 1: Call-to-action to U of I System asked alumni, faculty, staff, and students to advocate for the state budget to include an increase to higher education. In total, 2,545 emails were sent to state legislators from 1,379 individuals.

### **OTHER EFFORTS**

#### ***“Conversations with Constituents” meetings***

Illinois Connection continues efforts to host virtual in-district meetings with every member of the Illinois General Assembly. From July 2021 to today, around 352 advocates participated in more than 34 meetings.

#### ***“Small U of I System Advocacy Days”***

Throughout this session, we also hosted several small advocacy days where different units and groups across the system came to Springfield and shared their work and stories. The legislators appreciate hearing about all the individual programs we have and how our budget is used to invest in these programs. During this year’s state legislative session, 13 programs participated in more than 65 meetings with members of the ILGA in Springfield.

#### ***Meetings with UIAA Clubs and Networks***

ERC staff joined the UIAA Clubs Zoom call to present our legislative initiatives and upcoming advocacy efforts. Club members were encouraged to join Illinois Connection.

***Student Advocacy Coalition***

The U of I System supports three registered student organizations (one at each of our universities). Throughout the year the students advocate for the U of I System, learn about our priorities and get training from our team on the best practices and tactics for advocacy.

## Illinois Connection By the Numbers

Below is a profile of currently coded Illinois Connection advocates. This list breaks down registered advocates by various demographics.

### Advocate Profile

Total unique advocates coded in TED (active in the past five years): 28,830

Advocates by:

- **Locations**
  - Illinois – 22,133
  - Outside Illinois – 6,700
- **Affiliation**
  - University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign – 15,689
  - University of Illinois Chicago – 11,452
  - University of Illinois Springfield – 1,136
  - University of Illinois System – 553
- **Gender**
  - Male – 13,182
  - Female – 15,502
  - Blank – 79
- **Age bracket**
  - 15-29 – 4,473
  - 30-39 – 8,489
  - 40-49 – 4,349
  - 50-59 – 3,536
  - 60-69 – 3,355
  - 70-79 – 2,223
  - 80-89 – 736
  - 90-99 – 133
  - 100+ – 3
  - Blank – 1,466
- **Race/ethnicity**
  - Asian or Pacific Islander – 2,950
  - Hispanic or Latino – 1,451
  - White/Non-Hispanic – 10,303
  - Black/African American – 1,621
  - American Indian/Alaskan Native – 26



## Social Media

### Who Mentioned Us?

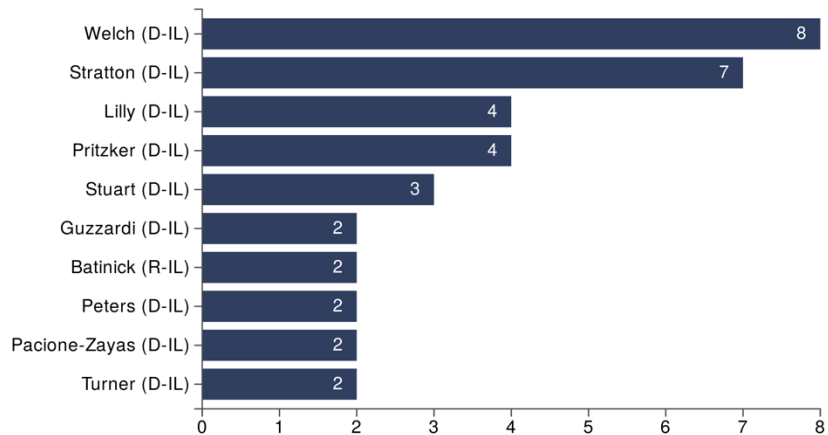
Between July 2022 and June 2023, legislators shared and/or mentioned the U of I System on Facebook and Twitter 411 times ([Review a complete list of post and total numbers.](#))

### U of I System Mentions

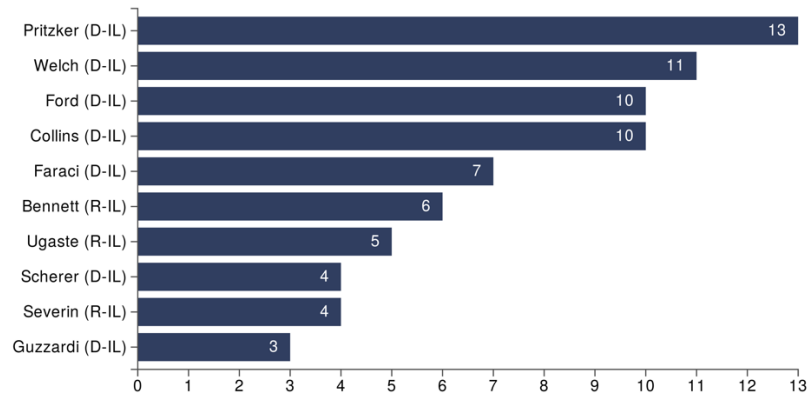
#### Illinois General Assembly (State)

- Over the past year, state legislators mentioned the U of I System 218 times. Speaker Emanuel “Chris” Welch tops the list having referenced the U of I System 21 times, followed by Gov. Pritzker (17), Rep. Ford (10) and Rep. Collins (10).

#### Twitter



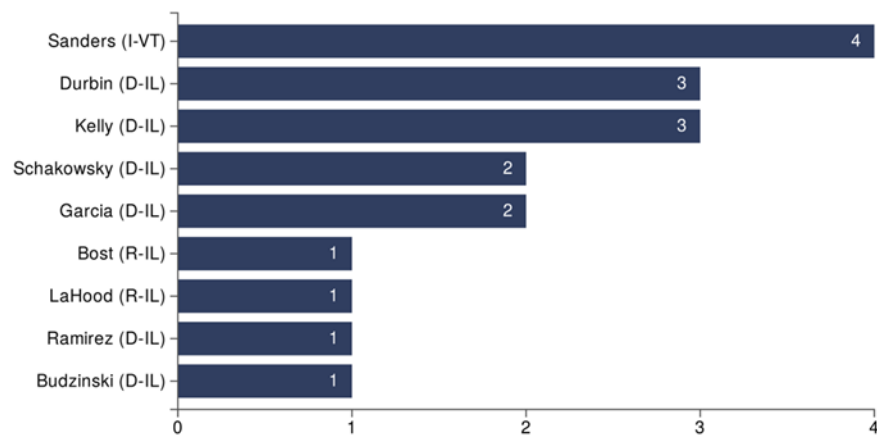
## Facebook



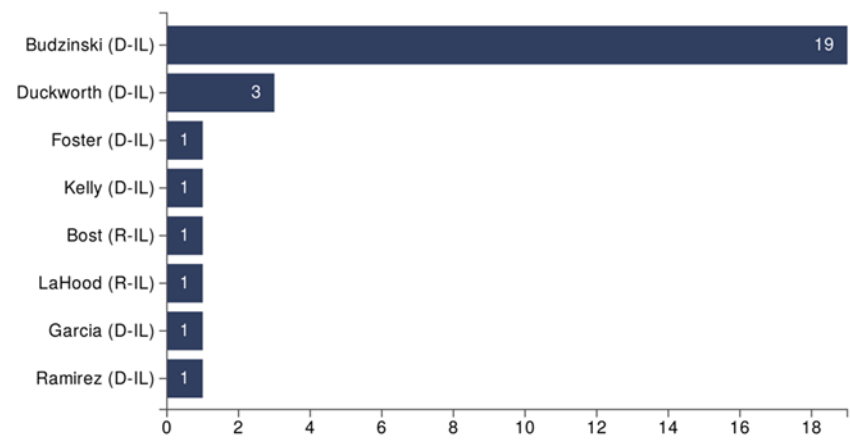
## U.S. Congress (Federal)

- Federal legislators referenced the U of I System 48 times. Sen. Sanders (4), Congresswoman Kelly (4), Sen. Durbin (3), Sen. Duckworth (3) and Congressman Garcia (3) were top sharers.

## Twitter



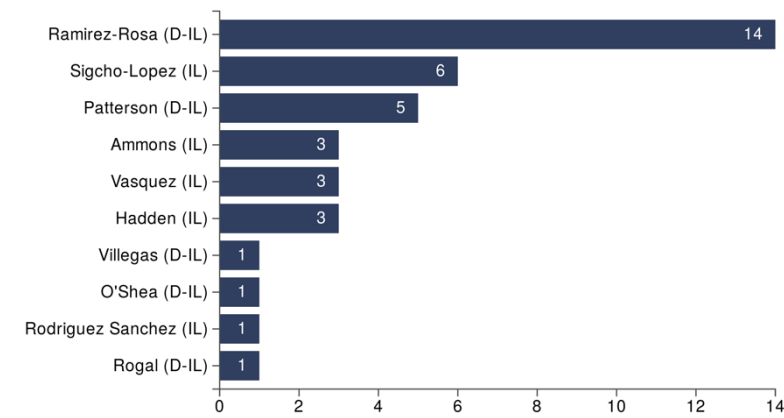
Facebook



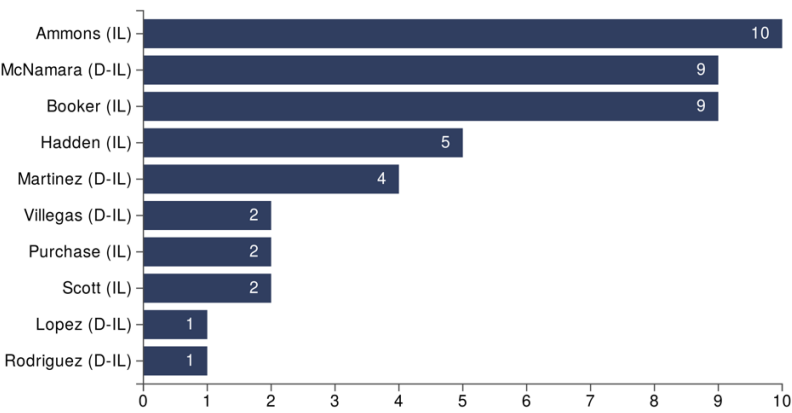
Illinois Local (Local/Chicago) Twitter

- In the past year, Chicago local officials referenced the U of I System 145 times. Alderman Carlos Ramirez-Rosa (14) shared/referenced us the most, followed by County Clerk and Recorder Aaron Ammons (13), Mayor Thomas "Tom" McNamara (9), Mayor Nathaniel Booker (9) and Alderman Sigcho-Lopez (6).

Twitter



Facebook



## Yearly Analytics: ERC Twitter, OGR and Illinois Connections Facebook Pages

ERC worked to increase its reach and engagement on its three government relations social media accounts: [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and the [Illinois Connection Facebook page](#). Our followers on all accounts increased this year.

ERC followed a weekly social media plan that involved regular posting on Twitter, Instagram and the Illinois Connection Facebook page at least three times per week. On Mondays, ERC creates an original graphic to honor an alumni legislator. On Wednesdays, ERC features specific research going on at our three universities (#ResearchWednesday). On Fridays, ERC features federally funded projects at our three universities (#FederallyFundedFriday). ERC also creates social media plans for events throughout the year. ERC uses social media to highlight current events and meetings with Illinois legislators. Virtual advocacy events, fly-ins, district meetings, and Calls-to-Action are featured on our pages. In addition, our U of I Caucus Monday Highlights regularly performed well and earned attention from Illinois legislators.

### Followers/Likes July 2022-present.

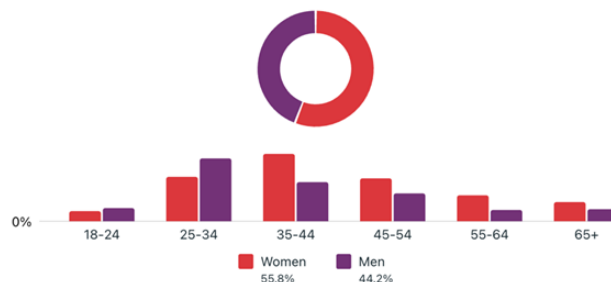
- Twitter 1,653 followers (up 13 from last year)
- GR Facebook 579 likes and 663 followers
- IL Connection, 1,000 likes and 1,000 followers
- Instagram, 328 followers
- LinkedIn, 515 connections

### GR Facebook

Facebook followers ⓘ

663

Age & gender ⓘ



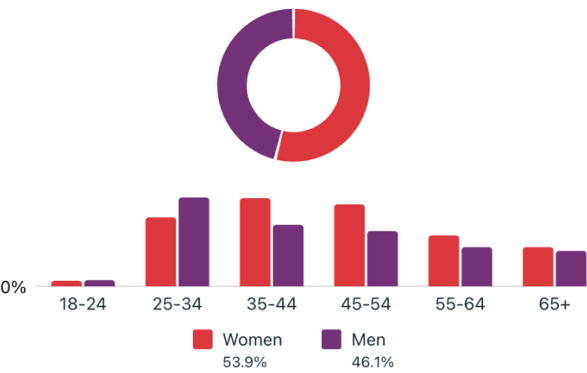


IC Facebook

Facebook followers ⓘ

1,069

Age & gender ⓘ



IC Instagram

Instagram followers ⓘ

328

Age & gender ⓘ

