Human Services

Medicaid Changes (HB 5007): Caps the Medicaid provisions of Section 25 of the State Finance Act at $700 million in FY13 and $100 million in FY14 and beyond. This "Section 25" reform has been characterized as "cutting up the Governor's Medicaid credit card" because it would limit his ability to simply charge added costs in Medicaid to the next fiscal year and thereby avoid implementing reforms adopted by the General Assembly. The moratorium on expanding the Medicaid program is extended until January 25, 2015 (2 year extension). Also includes a Cook County Medicaid Expansion: Adds up to 250,000 individuals to the Medicaid program and requires Cook County to repay the State for any costs incurred by the State.

Local Government

Historic Easements (HB 3372): States that any easement that is to be used for the construction of an underground water main, storm sewer, or sanitary sewer, and was obtained by a governmental entity through an eminent domain proceeding, does not need to be recorded in the county recorder's office if the entity can show the final judgment of the court and payment to the party who possessed the property. Addresses issues surrounding the lack of historic recording of eminent domain proceedings on properties extending back to the early 1900s, when often records weren't always kept or maintained with regularity.

Lake County Telecommunication Project (HB 2956): Allows Lake County to regulate telecom facilities via a process of approving or denying sites before regular county regulations kick in.

Education

CPS Class Reduction (SB 3362): Creates a pilot class-size-reduction grant program for grades 6-8 in Chicago School District.

Judiciary

Health Care Services Lien (HB 5823): Provides that a petition filed under the Health Care Services Lien Act may be served upon the interested adverse parties by personal service, substitute service, or registered or certified mail. Provides that if a subrogation claim, or other right of reimbursement claim, that arises out of the payment of medical expenses or other benefits that exist with respect to a claim for personal injury or death, and the recovery is diminished by i) comparative fault, or ii) by reason of the uncollectibility of the fill value of the claim resulting from limited liability insurance or from any other cause, the subrogation claim will be diminished in the same proportion as the personal injury/death claimant's recovery is diminished.

Expedited Foreclosure (SB 2534): Establishes an expedited process for foreclosures of abandoned property.

Environment

Clean Air Act (HJR 34): Supports the United States Environmental Protection Agency in its efforts to protect the health of Illinoisans and fulfill the charge of the Clean Air Act to clean up dangerous air pollution, including mercury, lead, soot, smog, and carbon pollution.

Labor

Workforce Development (SR 774): Designates the week of August 26-Sept 1, 2012 as "Workforce Development Week."
Transportation

Remittance Agents (HB 3340): Requires a licensed rebuilder, repairer, new or used vehicle dealer, or remittance agent to obtain a salvage title when submitting an application for a title where he knows or should have known the vehicle to have sustained damages in excess of 33 1/3% of the vehicle's fair market value. Intent is to prevent remitters who know that a vehicle is damaged to the point where a salvage title is required from attempting to sell the vehicle to a customer with clear title. Tightens law regarding the licensing and application of a license to remittance agents to ensure that the Secretary of State has the appropriate information on agents and can take proper actions if a remittance agent is in violation of the Retailers’ Occupation Tax Act, Certificates of Title Act, or offenses against registration and certificate of title laws.

Motorcycle Awareness Month (SR 764): Proclaims May as Motorcycle Awareness Month.

Higher Education

University Hiring (HB 5914): Prohibits universities from paying any external hiring search firms except for hiring the President of the university or in a case when the University President and Board of Trustees demonstrate a justifiable need for guidance from an individual or firm with specific expertise in the field of hiring.

Criminal Law

Police Training (HB 196): Adds a new $15 fee to criminal, traffic or ordinance violation convictions or guilty pleas. Funds would be channeled to a new State Police Merit Board Public Safety Fund to provide training for State Police. This fund is not subject to sweeps by the Governor or legislature.

Drug-Related Death (HB 3499): Clarifies that persons can be convicted under Illinois' drug-induced homicide law regardless of whether or not the drugs were purchased or obtained in Illinois, so long as the death occurred in Illinois.

Caylee's Law (HB 3801): This bill was sent to the Senate floor with an understanding that it will be stripped of content and amended. Originally similar to SB 2537, the measure was filed in response to the Florida death of Caylee Anthony and subsequent acquittal of her mother, who failed to report the child missing and concealed the child's death.

Reporting to School Officials (HB 5602): Allows law enforcement officials to share information with school officials regarding minors who are arrested or taken into custody. Information can be shared if the local law enforcement agency or officer believes that there is an imminent threat of physical harm to students, school personnel, or others present in the school or on school grounds. Adds harassment through electronic communications and hazing to the list of offenses that are permitted to be shared through the reciprocal reporting system under current law.

Scrap Metal Theft (HB 3825): Addressed the growing problem of metal theft by strengthening record-keeping requirements to make it more difficult to sell stolen metal, requiring greater proof that the seller owns the scrap metal and by providing tougher criminal penalties for selling or buying stolen scrap metal. Records of transactions must be retained for 3 instead of 2 years.

Held/Not Called (HB 1237), (SB 2781)
Licensed Activities

Surgical Technologist (SB 2915): Requires all hospitals and ambulatory surgical treatment centers to employ a surgical technologist. States that no person can practice or attempt to practice surgical technology without a valid registration as a surgical technologist issued by IDFPR. Establishes educational and certification requirements for surgical technologists.

Revenue

Fixed Base Operator Tax Exemption (HB 4110): Allows property owned by the Metropolitan Airport Authority of Rock Island County and the Lansing Municipal Airport that is leased to a fixed base operator to be exempt from property taxes, including improvements on the property.

Pensions and Investments

SURS Working Retirees (HB 4996): States that for each annuitant rehired by an entity of the State Universities Retirement System for more than 18 weeks, and who is receiving pay greater than 40 percent of their highest annual earnings, the employer is responsible for contributing the necessary contribution for that employee into SURS.

Police/Fire Working Retirees (HB 1605): Allows fire/police in the downstate/suburban police/fire pension funds to return to work and not have their pension suspended he or she is at least 55 and has at least 30 years of service; his or her annual earnings during the contractual service period are not more then 35 percent of his/her earnings from the last 12 months preceding separation from service; his or her earnings did not increase by more then 10 percent per year during the 2 years preceding separation from service; the term of the contractual employment does not exceed the lesser of 75 days or 600 hours in a calendar year. Also requires employers to pay 14 percents of the person's annual earnings during the contractual service period to the police/fire fund.

GA Pension (HB 3969): States that if a participant's final average salary in a pension system within the Retirement Systems Reciprocal Act, other than the General Assembly Retirement System, is used to calculate a proportional retirement annuity for that participant under GARS, then the increased cost of the annuity paid by GARS will be paid by the employer of the participant to GARS. Limits the GA pension benefit (pre-1994) that allows GA members to use salary from another government entity for the GA pension. Now states that that GA members must work there for 2 years, while current law says 1 year.
Executive

Election Code (HB 5201): The measure has been stripped of content to be used later as a "vehicle bill"

Grocery Store Liquor Sales (HB 3329): Provides two exemptions to the prohibition on liquor sales within 100 feet of a school. The exemptions are needed for two grocery stores being built in Chicago which happen to be near schools.

Home Mortgage (HB 4521): Makes several changes to laws governing mortgages and real estate disclosure, including increasing the mortgage company license fee. Also increases maximum fines for mortgage loan violations. Includes a "whistleblower protection" for those who report mortgage loan violations.

Local Officials (HB 5078): This bill allows an elected county board member to also serve as an elected mayor, president of the board of trustees of a village or incorporated town, alderman or member of the board of trustees of a village or incorporated town. The office holder cannot participate in a contract between the two entities and cannot get two pensions.

Metro East Police (HB 1404): This creates a special Metro East Police District for East St. Louis, Washington Park, Alorton, and Brooklyn. Designed to create greater oversight over the local police in part due to several cases of police corruption in the area. Gives the Illinois Finance Authority oversight over the district funds.

Parking Garages (HB 5547): Allows the City of Chicago and Cook County to charge parking garage and parking lot taxes based on a percentage of receipts rather than a flat tax. The city and county could choose which method they use.

Racketeering (HB 1907): This is known as the "Mini" RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations) Act. It creates enhanced penalties for an extensive list of offenses when done in furtherance of a criminal enterprise. It is an initiative of the Cook County State's Attorney and is intended to target street gangs who make huge profits as a result of engaging in drug trafficking and other criminal activity. The asset forfeiture provisions can go after gangs by taking away their wealth and other assets such as vehicles and real estate. While the federal RICO law was designed to go after organized crime, over the years it has been used against other groups, organizations and individuals. The broad application has drawn criticism from many quarters and has lead to several failed attempts in Illinois to enact a State RICO law.

Special Lottery Funds (HB 5866): The bill allows the Department of Lottery to conduct lottery game drawings to benefit any of the following causes which are currently scratch-off games: Ticket for the Cure (breast cancer); Scratch Off Illinois Veterans; Scratch Out Multiple Sclerosis; or Quality of Life (HIV/AIDS prevention and education). The sponsor indicated he intends to also offer an amendment that would allow Powerball to be included in internet lottery games.

Tax Agreements (HB 3859): Requires that details of tax revenue sharing agreements between businesses and local municipalities must be disclosed to the Illinois Department of Revenue. This is an attempt to go after agreements where municipalities rebate sales tax revenues back to businesses in order to attract those companies.

Tax Sales (HB 4940): Seeks to clarify Illinois law and address recent court rulings on tax sales. Proponents argued that strict court interpretations has made it difficult for buyers of property to secure a clear title because he standards that have been imposed can invalidate a sale for only minor oversights.
**Township Collectors (HB 1981):** Eliminates township collectors in Cook County. Current collectors would serve out the remainder of their terms, but in the future the duties of township collectors would be rolled into the responsibilities of township assessors.

**Held/Not Called**

SB 842, HB 1489, HB 4148, SR 706, SJR 68, HB 5151, HJR 69