



CATHOLIC CONFERENCE OF ILLINOIS
Defense of Marriage Legislative Update

Provided by:
Zach Wichmann
Director of Government Affairs

June 1, 2012

The Illinois General Assembly adjourned in the early morning hours of June 1st after passing Medicaid reform and the FY 2013 state budget but failing to come to agreement on pension reforms. The Governor and legislative leaders are expected to call legislators into a special session in the coming weeks to deal with the pension crisis.

The Medicaid reforms passed by the legislature were significant. The reforms reduced the State's Medicaid liability by \$1.4 billion, cut spending significantly and included a \$1 per pack cigarette tax increase.

The \$33.7 billion FY 2013 budget, which cuts discretionary spending by \$700 million, was approved despite House Republican opposition stemming from pension reform disagreements.

Pension reforms were hotly debated in the final few days of the session. Anyone who doubts the state of Illinois and its pension system are in crisis need only to reflect that the pension system is less than half-funded with a funding gap of approximately \$83 billion and that of the \$7 billion generated from the January 2011 tax increase, \$5.7 has gone to cover government-employee benefits.

Other legislative highlights this year include elimination of the much-criticized Legislative Scholarship program, changes to the procurement code and an expansion of on-line Lottery offerings. Lawmakers passed a major expansion of gambling in Illinois but Governor Quinn has threatened to veto similar legislation in the past.

LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

House Bill 5170 (Same-Sex Marriage; Harris-D) – This legislation states that all Illinois law concerning marriage apply equally to marriages of “same-sex and different-sex couples” and their children. The bill also states that all parties to a marriage and their children, regardless of whether the marriage is of a “same-sex or different-sex couple” have the same benefits, protections, and responsibilities under law, and these parties to a marriage are included in any definition or use of terms such as "spouse", "family", "immediate family", "dependent", "next of kin", "wife", "husband", "bride", "groom", "wedlock", and other terms that refer to or denote the spousal relationship. The bill was assigned to the House Human Services Committee, but was never called for a vote. There is not currently enough support to advance the bill out of the House. However, after the November election, there may be enough lame-duck members that they may try and push the bill as they did with the civil union legislation. Failing that, and dependent upon the outcomes of the November election, we expect them to make a serious push for this bill in 2013. [CCI opposes this legislation.](#)

House Joint Resolution Constitutional Amendment 10 (Beiser-D) & **Senate Joint Resolution Constitutional Amendment 16** (Haine-D) seek to define marriage as between one man and one woman in the Illinois Constitution. [Both were drafted by and are supported by CCI.](#) These resolutions will remain the centerpiece of our advocacy, although considering the high hurdles required for enactment, the resolutions' primary service may be in rallying for defense. We currently have 22 co-sponsors in the House and 15 co-sponsors in the Senate.

To amend the Constitution, the resolution(s) must receive the support of three-fifths of the members of both the House and Senate to be placed on the next general election ballot and then three-fifths of those voting on the question or a majority of those voting in the election.