



IDCCA
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Newsletter

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NEWS FROM AROUND THE ASSOCIATION

IN THIS ISSUE



President's Message

By: Doug House, President IDCCA
Chairman, Rock Island County Democratic Party

Thank You!

I am writing to ask each of you to reach out to those local state legislators that voted to end the budget standoff and thank them! The stalemate lasted far too long and inflicted far too much pain.

Our state, like our country, is governed by an out of touch Autocrat that believes he has absolute power.

We know that government simply doesn't work that way.

It has been a long and hard-fought battle to get this far and it is far from over yet. But I applaud the leadership of Speaker Michael J. Madigan and Senate President John Cullerton and the legislators from both sides of the aisle that worked with them to end this Governor Rauner created financial disaster.

While this has been an ugly chapter in our state it is not the final chapter. Other states like California were on the brink of collapse and worked their way back and we will too

with new leadership!

Illinois has and is dealing with a financial crisis but we are not a poor state! Illinois has the 5th largest State Gross Domestic Product in our nation. We are an economic engine and we will roar again.

The Governor has been working to scare our citizens about what he feels lies ahead for Illinois. Instead of compromising on a solution, he would rather blame others and campaign on his self-fulfilling prophecy. We will only truly be able to put this disaster behind us and move our state forward by electing a new Governor that cares about our citizen's and our future.

Governor Rauner only cares about what best serves him and a very narrow band of Alt Right Conservatives that even most Republicans cannot identify with.

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Precinct Committeeman Recruiting
We are recruiting Democratic Precinct Committeeman statewide to assist with the grassroots effort to build the Democratic Party in Illinois. If you are interested in being a part of this grassroots effort, please email dan@ildcca.org with you name, address, phone, email, county and precinct. Your County Democratic Party Chairman will contact you immediately!

The Illinois Democratic County Chairman's Association is a state wide, grassroots Democratic political organization. It is made up of the elected Democratic County Chairman in all 102 counties in Illinois. The mission of the IDCCA is to help elect Democrats in each county while continuing to grow the Democratic Party in the State of Illinois. Rock Island County Chairman Doug House is the President of the Illinois Democratic County Chairman's Association.

Paid for by the Illinois Democratic County Chairman's Association. A copy of our report is (or will be) available for purchase from the Illinois State Board of Elections, Springfield IL

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We can't move the state forward alone we need your help, we need new candidates to join existing Democratic officials to run for office at all levels of government, we need new volunteers, and Precinct Committee men and women. Whatever way you can participate, we invite you to join us in our fight for a Better Illinois!

Doug House
IDCCA President
Rock Island County Democratic Party
Chairman
@ILDCCA @RiCoDemocrats

Resistance Illinois

By Ken Kimber, @demsforillinois,

The Resistance Summer program is a nationwide Democratic Party initiative designed to bolster volunteers in states by assisting in local organizing projects over the summer. That is why the Democratic National Committee, the Democratic Party of Illinois, the Illinois Democratic County Chairman's Association, and Schakowsky for Congress have launched Resistance Illinois, a project designed to grow local grassroots action and build a lasting grassroots infrastructure that will deliver victory in 2018 and beyond. Since Donald Trump's inauguration, there has been an explosion of grassroots activity opposing this administration's abuse of power and the Trump-Rauner agenda, which prioritizes advantages for the rich over the needs of middle-class and working families.

Recognizing that a one-size-fits-all approach is ineffective, each program will be unique to each local area's strategic priorities and organizational capacity. This program is designed to build Democratic infrastructure to benefit Democratic candidates in the 2018 federal, state, county, and local races—Resistance Illinois will be the high tide that raises all Democratic boats in the general election.

Through Resistance Illinois, we hope to educate, organize, and mobilize grassroots energy from across Illinois to help build our party's base of political power, resist Trump and Rauner's attacks on hardworking families, and elect Democrats up-and-down the ticket. We will be offering resources, tools, and advice, but leave the decision-

making up to you. Resistance Illinois isn't meant to replace your existing efforts, but to supplement them and make your organization stronger. You can choose to participate in all, some, or none of the program with no strings attached.

We're asking you to partner with us and be a leader in rebuilding Illinois' grassroots infrastructure from the ground up.



Southland Friends of Labor—Labor Friendly Political Training Recap

By Wei Luo, @DuPage_Dems

On June 24, I joined fellow Democrats for a labor friendly political training workshop in Chicago Heights. Having recently returned to the greater Chicago area after graduating from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, I was looking for ways to support progressive candidates and issues in my community going into the 2018 elections. The workshop, hosted by the Southland Friends of Labor, ILDCCA, and National Democratic Training Committee (NDTC), provided the tools I needed to do just that.

Natasha Smith of the NDTC and Dan Kovats of ILDCCA gave a detailed explanation of how

political campaigns work, from messaging to fundraising to field operations. They emphasized the importance of conducting systematic, data-driven campaigns and talking sincerely about the issues we care about. I was surprised by the diverse backgrounds of the other attendees. Some came from Kankakee County, while others came from Cook or Will County. Some were union workers, while others were attorneys or local elected officials. Some planned to run for office, while others planned to volunteer as activists or campaign staff. Despite these differences, everyone shared a common goal of advancing progressive, labor friendly policies in Illinois using the tools taught in the workshop.

As I headed home after the workshop, I continued to mull over ILDCCA President Doug House's remarks at the start of the session that all politics is retail, and we must be willing to go door to door to persuade our neighbors and fellow citizens. That's the lesson I intend to bring home with me, and given the enthusiasm I saw at the workshop, I know that Democrats across the region will not be alone in that journey.



Education Funding In Illinois

By State Senator Andy Manar
@AndyManar

When I was 15, Sen. Vince Demuzio invited me to spend the day with him at the Illinois Capitol, stirring my love for public service and stoking my desire to be a catalyst for change.

This spring, several students joined me for a day at the Capitol, coming from mostly public schools across the 48th Senate District.

These schools, in communities like Taylorville, Nokomis and Springfield, and countless others across Illinois represent various populations, student needs and local property wealth. They come from Downstate communities that have witnessed an increase in poverty and less support from the State to combat poverty through public education.

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Illinois' terrible school funding formula fails to acknowledge the inherent differences among Illinois' diverse communities or the idea that offering the same high-quality education to every student requires different resources — and therefore different levels of funding — in each school district. Our rotten, outdated formula identifies winning and losing students based on little more than ZIP codes.

Students born in the Illinois rust or coal belts, shrinking rural villages or decaying urban centers are out of luck because the formula relies too heavily on property taxes to fund schools, and these communities can't keep up. The formula annually siphons state dollars away and funnels them to wealthier districts. And if you happen to be a low-income student, Illinois will only spend 81 cents on the dollar to educate you.

It's insane, and if we don't change the formula now, it will continue to erode and punish downstate and low-income school districts.

That's where Senate Bill 1 comes in. This plan, approved by the General Assembly in May, would move Illinois to an evidence-based formula, which has widespread support from school superintendents, educators, parents and community groups. No school districts lose funding under this plan — no exceptions — and it builds in property tax relief for high-tax school districts.

We need your help to push Governor Rauner to sign the bill. I'm urging parents and taxpayers to do their homework and join the chorus of voices that have rallied around SB 1. Engage in social media and help us spread the work that this bill must become law.

The Governor and republicans have decried the bill as a "Chicago Bailout" though well over one hundred schools in Illinois receive a greater proportional share of dollars than Chicago. The Governor isn't calling the bill the "Beardstown Bailout" or the "Kankakee Kick-Back" is he?

This is the closest the legislature has come in decades to getting a school funding overhaul to the governor's desk. It's a good bill that corrects a long-standing wrong and puts all Illinois students on the path to a brighter future.

Let's go back for a moment and talk about some of those students who visited me at the Capitol this year.

Shaelyn Steele of Illiopolis was a senior at Sangamon Valley High School. She already had been taking nursing courses through community college two nights a week so she could work as a nursing assistant this summer and get an impressive head start on her college education.

Cole Davlin is now a senior at Springfield High School. His favorite subject is history, and he enjoys taking foreign language courses because he hopes to study political science and do ambassador work overseas after college.

Jack Curtin, who lives on his family's farm in Stonington, recently graduated from Taylorville High School. He told me how he had helped generate support for a property tax increase after the school district was forced to make cuts to balance the budget. He'll study crop science in college and wants to make sure Taylorville schools are in good shape when he returns home to Christian County someday to work on the family farm and put down roots of his own.

We need to do everything we can to nurture bright, driven, successful students like these — and every Illinois student. It begins by fixing the formula and making Illinois a national leader on fair school funding.

— State Sen. Andy Manar is a Democrat from Bunker Hill and the sponsor of Senate Bill 1.



**Illinois Democrats
"Good Government"
Message Beats
Governor Junk's
"Government
Chaos" in 2018**

By State Representative Lou Lang
@StateRepLouLang

Good government is good politics.

That's Illinois Democrats' message strategy heading into the 2018 election: good government.

Good government means ending Governor Bruce Rauner's manufactured budget crisis and, finally, balancing the state budget despite painful decisions, which included both

increasing revenue and cutting state spending by \$2.9 billion – \$2.9 billion.

By approving a balanced budget, we can begin to repair the damage inflicted on Illinois by Bruce Rauner's three-year political jihad against organized labor, Downstate Illinois, and the City of Chicago.

More important, because of Illinois Democrats' balanced budget, the benefits to the state will be felt nearly immediately:

Our schools, which were at risk of being unable to open, will open in the fall and Democrats' balanced budget will provide an additional \$334 million next year, including an extra \$500,000 for agricultural education.

Domestic violence shelters, which were closing their doors, denying critical services to survivors of abuse, will remain open.

Breast cancer screenings for women will resume.

To battle the heroin and opioid crisis rampaging throughout Illinois, financially starved mental health centers and addiction treatment providers have been rescued with additional money and will remain open.

Doctors, dentists, hospitals, human services providers, small businesses owners to whom the State now owes more than \$14 billion – that's billion – in a backlog of unpaid bills will now start to get paid.

State universities – Eastern Illinois, Western Illinois, Northern Illinois, Illinois State, Chicago, University of Illinois – will have their funding restored and will survive, and, once again, thrive.

Road improvement and bridge repair projects will continue and 22,000 construction workers will keep their jobs.

Current spending has been cut by \$2.9 billion.

Illinois' bond credit rating will avoid being downgraded to "junk."

That's good government.

That's Illinois Democrats' message to voters.

Bruce Rauner, on the other hand, has had only one message: government chaos is good.

What has been the political impact of Rauner's "government chaos is good" message over the last two years?

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Voters detest him.

After two years into Illinois' horrendous budget crisis a clear majority of Illinois voters disapprove – 58% – of Bruce Rauner's job performance while a mere 36% approve, according to a Paul Simon Public Policy Institute poll of 1,000 registered voters conducted March 4 – March 11, 2017.

"We have tested Gov. Rauner's job approval four times since he took office, and two findings jump out at us," said professor Charlie Leonard, one of the designers of the poll. "First is that the governor's approval rating, since Spring of 2015, right after he assumed office, has remained relatively steady in the high 30s to low 40s, though at 36 percent it's the lowest we have seen. Second is that his disapproval rating has grown consistently, from 31 disapproving in March 2015 to 58 percent today—almost doubling."

Where is Bruce Rauner popular?

Nowhere.

In the City of Chicago, 64% disapprove of his performance while 31% approve. In downstate Illinois, 56% disapprove and only 38% approve of the job he's doing. In the suburbs of Cook and the collar counties, 58% disapprove; 37% approve.

How has your "government chaos is good" worked out for you, Bruce? Huh?

Even the ultra-conservative, pro-business newspaper, the Wall Street Journal, has turned on Bruce Rauner.

In a June 2017 editorial, the paper's editors wrote that because of Illinois' collapsing credit score, Bruce Rauner deserved the title: "Governor Junk." But it's clear from the Simon poll that Illinois voters had months earlier rated Bruce Rauner's performance as "junk."

Nevertheless, let's be clear. A tax increase is never popular. Never. It's not even popular among Democrats. The same Simon poll revealed that only 18% of Democrats supported a "tax increase-only" solution to balancing the budget. That's why Illinois Democrats' budget plan also cuts \$2.9 billion from current spending in order to live within our means. The combination of both increased revenue and budget cuts earns the support of 38% of Democrats and 39% of independents.

What was the alternative? Cutting money for K-12 education? Cutting programs for poor people? Cutting money for state universities?

Voters are clear: no.

The Simon poll says 82% oppose cutting elementary and high school budgets; 72% oppose cutting "programs for poor people"; and 67% oppose cutting funding for state universities.

"Not a single governmental function was targeted by a majority of the voters as places they would support cuts in the agencies' budgets," according to the Simon Institute press release.

Balancing the state budget, providing more money for K-12 education, protecting vulnerable families, adequately funding state universities, while cutting the budget by \$2.9 billion is good government. It also makes good politics.

Good government beats Governor "Junk" in 2018.

Rep. Lang is the Illinois house Deputy Majority Leader and Executive Vice Chairman of the Cook County Democratic Party



Polling in a New Era of Polling for Local Campaigns

By Dave Fako, @FakoResearch

We all saw what happened in the 2016 elections. Numerous publicly available polls and most polling aggregators were predicting a win for Hillary Clinton, some estimating a large electoral college victory. Although it is true that more American voters supported Hillary nationwide, the way the vote fell put Donald Trump into the White House – and the ensuing governmental chaos, divisive actions and incompetence he has instigated.

Trump's victory also left many to doubt the accuracy of polling, even though there is ample evidence that properly conducted polling remains reliable, albeit with more challenges than in previous years. Lower response and cooperation rates, a significant increase in Cell Phone Only (CPO) and Cell Phone Mostly (CPM) households and the corresponding decrease in the use of landlines have contributed to this challenge, although most reputable pollsters

have addressed this issue. These issues are amplified at the local levels of campaigns, where smaller jurisdictions and populations are more challenging to sample than larger areas and populations.

So, what is it you should look for and expect in political campaign's polling at the local levels to ensure reliability and strategic value to your campaign?

There are various key factors to ask and expect from a pollster when hiring them to survey for local campaigns:

Understand that your pollster's primary responsibility is to research and assess public opinion. Based on the opinions it is your pollster's responsibility to provide you with a reliable assessment of the political environment, status of the campaign, recommended targeting, strategic plans and messages that fit your campaign's needs and, most importantly, your values and beliefs. Your pollster is not there to dictate your positions on issues or exactly what to say, etc. Listen to your pollster as an honest guide and sounding board to put your campaign on a path to victory within the context of your beliefs, values and priorities that connects with the voters' values and concerns.

Understand the realities and practicality of polling in your county or local jurisdiction. Some areas can be sampled properly, while other areas are simply too small. A reputable pollster will give you an honest assessment of the practicality and provide alternative options if a standard survey is not practical.

Know where the pollster will get their sample and what percentage of the sample is cell phones. Reputable pollsters and their polling data / sample partner firms will have a regularly updated sample with a high-quality cell phone match. The firm FR&S uses updates their samples every 4 - 6 weeks and, pending the area, will include up to 50% or more cell phones within the sample.

Ask about the pollster's sampling and screening techniques. Many of the accuracy issues with polling trace back to improper sampling and screening. The screens are often too tight, not allowing likely voters to participate, which was a known problem with some of the 2016

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polling. Or, they can be too loose, letting in too many respondents who are not likely to participate in the election. This directly relates to the sample source (how good is the data?) and the screening techniques.

Be involved in the process of drafting the survey and demand unique and customized research for your campaign. This does not mean the client / candidate writes the questionnaire. It means that the campaign Team has input in what information they want assessed or tested in the poll, with unique and localized customizations. Too often, a local campaign can be given a boiler plate poll based on a standard format from higher level campaigns without any customization that would be insightful to a local campaign. We saw a lot of this in 2016, when many down ballot campaigns throughout the country began mirroring some of the national messaging, which was a catastrophic failure.

Expect realistic and practical strategic advice based on the data. Your pollster should develop data-driven strategic plans that fit your needs, the realistic capabilities of the campaign or organization, and the candidates or organization's values and vision.

Finally, understand and ask about alternative research techniques and if they are an option for your situation. More pollsters are starting to use mixed mode (phone + online) surveys where practical and increased use of online technology overall. In some cases, this may be useful to a campaign, although every situation is unique.

Campaigns, candidates and pollsters working cooperatively leads to higher quality research, stronger team building, and the development of focused and effective plans. It is vital that your pollster is committed to conducting accurate polls and developing practical strategic plans that fit your values and needs, as well as the dynamics of their situation. Properly assessing your pollster's capabilities and match with your campaign, understanding what polling can do for you and listening to your pollster's advice within the parameters of your values will lead to a stronger, more efficient and effective campaign that gives you a better opportunity to succeed.

Dave Fako founded Fako Research & Strategies in 1998 with the goal of providing clients with quality, actionable research and strategies. Dave Fako is recognized for his

attention to detail, hard work ethic, competitive drive and refusal to accept the "I can't" attitude. Dave Fako approaches all challenges and finds solutions to problems based on the winning philosophy espoused by the ancient Carthaginian General Hannibal and quoted by Saul Alinsky in his famous book, Rules for Radicals: "we will either find a way or make one". For thirty years, Dave Fako has developed strategy for campaigns at all levels throughout the country, has advised numerous public policy advocacy organizations, as well as national and regional private sector companies. Dave's expertise is state, local and judicial elections, as well as marriage equality, health care, and smoke-free issues, gaming, clean energy, education, tax and bond initiatives, telecommunications and pension and budget issues. More information on Fako Research and Strategies is found at www.fakoresearch.com.

Gash and Houlihan to Receive Democratic Party Builder Awards

By Art Friedson @artfir

The Illinois Democratic County Chairmen's Association is pleased to announce that it will be honoring two outstanding Illinois Democrats, Hon. Lauren Beth Gash and Hon. Bill Houlihan, with Democratic Party Builder Awards at the ILDCCA's Chairmen's Brunch on August 17, 2017.

Both honorees have long records of distinguished service and significant accomplishments building grassroots support for progressive issues and Democratic candidates in Illinois.

Lauren Beth Gash, of Highland Park, Lake County, is a life-long community organizer who has served as an Illinois State Representative, a Commissioner with the Illinois Human Rights Commission, a member of the Electoral College on behalf of President Obama in 2008 and 2012 and on behalf of Hillary Clinton in 2016 and currently serves on the State Central



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Committee representing the 10th Congressional District. She also has served on numerous not-for-profit boards, including the League of Women Voters, PTA, and the Anti-Defamation League, and served as a volunteer attorney at Prairie State Legal Services.

In addition to her direct service as an elected official and volunteer, she has created a lasting legacy through her tireless work as the Founding Chair of the Tenth Congressional Democrats (Tenth Dems), a grassroots organization dedicated to building a strong Democratic infrastructure in Chicago's north and northwestern suburbs. Howard Dean has called Tenth Dems "one of the most impressive grassroots groups I've seen anywhere in the country."

Tenth Dems works in many ways to build community and promote Democratic politics. The group's Tenth Dems University regularly hosts nationally recognized speakers, and other committees help local residents through such efforts as Tenth Dems' Job Interview Workshops, Expungement and Sealing Events with volunteer attorneys, and Annual Student Poetry and Prose Contests. The Tenth Dems Election Protection Team put 125 lawyers at polling places throughout the 10th District in November, working to make sure that everyone who is entitled to vote is actually allowed to vote. Volunteers put into action the group's motto that "Politics should be about more than just elections; it should be about working together to build stronger communities."

Lauren holds a law degree from Georgetown University Law Center, where she served as Associate Editor of the American Criminal Law Review. As an undergrad at Clark University, she majored in Psychology. Lauren lives in Highland Park and is married to Gregg Garmisa. They have two adult children: Sarah, who holds an MBA and a Masters in Public Policy, works to promote social justice with not-for-profit organizations; and Ben, who serves as the Communications Director for U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth.

If you are a Democrat living in Illinois, you almost certainly know Bill Houlihan, of Springfield, Sangamon County, who is currently the State Director for U.S. Senator Dick Durbin, overseeing the Senator's four district offices.

Bill is an Illinois Democrat through and through. Born and raised in Chicago, the fourth

of eight children, Bill began his political year in 1964, at the age of 9, passing out literature during his father's successful campaign for Illinois State Representative. Later, Bill attended Eastern Illinois University, where he served as Student Council President and received a Bachelor of Science degree in Political Science. His first job out of school was as an organizer for the Illinois Educational Association in Springfield, directing local membership drives, assisting the Director of Public Affairs and consulting and developing strategies for numerous legislative races.

From the IEA, Bill went on to be Director of the Legislative Services staff and Administrative Assistant to Illinois Senate President Phil Rock. He honed many of his nuts-and-bolts political skills there, initiating annual district office conferences and working collaboratively while developing legislative issues, directing a legislative services staff, supervising district offices, developing and coordinating conferences and hearings, and developing legislative and communications strategies.

In 1993, Bill became the Director of the Downstate Offices of U.S. Senator Carol Mosely-Braun, coordinating her downstate activities and supervising constituent casework. When U.S. Senator Dick Durbin was elected in 1996, Bill brought his expertise in local, state and federal government to his current position as State Director.

At the grassroots level, Bill was elected to three two-year terms as Sangamon County Democratic Chairman, served as a Springfield Public Building Commissioner, Springfield Sanitary District Trustee and Springfield Housing Authority Commissioner. In March, 2014, he was elected the State Central Committeeman of the 18th District for the Democratic Party of Illinois, a position he still serves with distinction.

Bill lives in Springfield with his wife, Cindy Winans Houlihan. They are the parents of four children - Mariah, Grant and John (triplets!) and Neil - as well as five grandchildren.

Lauren and Bill have much in common. Each has lived a life of distinguished public service, but neither of them were content to leave it there. Both have reached deep into their communities to stimulate enthusiasm for issues and candidates that inspire Democrats. Both of them know the value of community organizing, working tirelessly to motivate and drive people to show up for a cause or candidate, contribute time, effort and money, and to reach out on a

personal basis, one-on-one, to bring about some good in the world. No matter what they were doing in their work lives, both Lauren and Bill have continued to speak to community groups, train upcoming leaders and candidates, identify and recruit new Democratic players, and relentlessly pursue the values and ideals of the Democratic Party. They are Democratic Party Builders in the truest sense of the phrase, accomplished professionals who are never reluctant to roll up their sleeves and do the hard work of building effective grassroots organizations that are the fundamental building blocks of our democracy.

The ILDCCA will be proud to bestow upon them the honor of the Party Builder Award at the Chairmen's Brunch on August 17th, 2017, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Springfield.