

Legislative Director Report – Kevin Palmer, January 2021 through March 10

Winter contacts

Given the current Pandemic, I remained in contact with legislators via social media and emails. I have thanked them for navigating these unusual times and especially thanked them for addressing issues related to remote learning.

Coordinating with IFT Legislative Director John Cusick

I continue to coordinate all upcoming legislative issues as well as contacting legislators with John. John is a great source for accessing legislators and will continue to keep me informed up future events.

Contact with State Legislators

I remain in touch with state legislators via social media and emails. I attended two virtual meetings via Zoom. One was with the 38th Ward Democrats, invited by Senator Rob Martwick, Chairman of the Senate Pension Committee. The other was a fundraiser for Alderman Sue Sadlowski Garza (10th Ward), the only teacher on the Chicago City Council and a member of the Progressive Caucus.

38th Ward Democrats monthly meeting with Speaker of The Illinois House of Representatives, Chris Welch

Senator Rob Martwick 10th District
Representative Lindsey LaPointe 19th District
Representative Jaime Andrade 40th District
IFT Legislative Director, John Cusick
Kiernan Fitzgerald, Chief of Staff for House Majority Leader, Greg Harris 13th District

Speaker Welch discussed his route to being elected Speaker, a job he did not pursue but was tapped by his colleagues. He talked about how he has to balance the needs of his constituents with the citizens of Illinois.

Education - he supports an elected Chicago School Board. He continues to support this and is working on getting the Governor to support it. Senator Martwick mentioned later that new legislation is being pushed by him and Senator Omar Aquino (2nd District) in the Senate and

Representative Delia Ramirez (4th District) in the House. All of which are a part of my lobbying group and I have reached out thanking them for sponsoring the legislation.

Top bills that the legislators are currently sponsoring/co-sponsoring:

LaPointe- young people with disabilities can finish their school year after they turn 22, rather than on their birthday.

Modifying the unemployment system that if a mistake is made that a claimant is over compensated, it is not on the individual to pay it back but on the system to allow the claimant to keep it; given it wasn't fraudulent.

Andrade: Assuring AI, if used in an interview, does not show bias towards gender, sexual orientation, and ethnicity/race.

Martwick: Data privacy for students who use school district equipment to prevent data mining. Elected city colleges board, similar to the push to implement an elected CPS school board. A state plan for a retirement savings for employees who do not have a retirement savings or pension in place. Currently it only applies to employers with 25 or more employees. This would expand to all employers.

Alderman Susan Sadlowski Garza's St. Patrick's Day Celebration (10th Ward)

Due to Alderman Sadlowski Garza's spirited nature, this was a truly festive zoom fundraiser. We started with being welcomed by an Irish singer, a REAL Irish singer. We were all told we HAD to wear green, I sported by IFT Green – Fremd green 1211 shirt. And, we were told to DRINK. I had an Irish Coffee! We then were then taught how to dance an Irish dance by a Trinity Irish Dance Company dancer.

Sue then discussed her efforts, and successes, in pushing labor legislation in the city council. Sue is one of the strongest labor/education aldermen. She mentioned her push to expand CPS inclusion of Trades education for students who wish to pursue a trades career. She gave several shout outs to her labor support and thanked the labor representatives in attendance. She then discussed what is going on in her ward with new development.