

100th General Assembly

Office of the Senate President

The Senate President is the presiding officer of the Illinois Senate, elected by the 59 members of the Senate to serve a two-year term. The Illinois Constitution, statutes and rules define the functions and responsibilities of the office.

The President appoints Senate members to standing committees and permanent and interim study commissions, designating one member as chair. The President also appoints the Majority Leader and Assistant Majority Leaders, who serve as officers of the Senate.

With the Speaker of the House, the Senate President shares primary responsibility for legislative procedures and operations. By strategically directing the flow of legislation, the President ultimately sets the pace of work in the Senate. The President is required to approve all vouchers for the expenditure of funds appropriated for use by the Senate and certify that all bills passed by the Senate are in accordance with Senate rules.

As chair of the Senate Operations Commission, the President oversees a seven-member management committee responsible for deciding Senate policy, hiring Senate employees, purchasing supplies, renting equipment, and maintaining the Senate chambers and office, among other duties.

In addition to presiding over the Senate, the President is the leader of the majority party in the Legislature's upper chamber. Likewise, the Senate Minority Leader, selected by the minority party and formally elected by all Senate members, speaks on behalf of the minority party. Responsibilities of the Senate Minority Leader include appointing members to serve on certain boards, commissions and standing committees, and selecting assistant leaders and staff.



John J. Cullerton
Senate President

John J. Cullerton (Democrat) has built a reputation over nearly 40 years in government as a keen negotiator focused on progress, bipartisanship and compromise in order to get results.

He began his service in the General Assembly in 1979 when he was elected to the Illinois House, where he served as Speaker Pro Tempore and Democratic Floor Leader. He was appointed to the Illinois Senate in 1991 and then elected the following year to represent the 6th Legislative District.

Early in his legislative career, he focused on traffic safety issues, sponsoring the state's first child safety and motorist seat belt laws that have now saved thousands of lives. As chairman of the Senate's Judiciary Committee, he worked on the independent Criminal Law Edit, Alignment and Reform

(CLEAR) Commission tasked with modernizing and clearing up confusing, duplicative and inconsistent criminal laws.

In 2009, Cullerton was elected Senate President by his colleagues. One of his first assignments was overseeing the historic impeachment trial of then Gov. Rod Blagojevich.

His tenure as Senate President has been marked by historic social and financial reforms including marriage equality, the end of the state's scandal-marred death penalty, McCormick Place workplace reforms and a constant focus on resolving the state's budget and debt problems.

Cullerton received both his undergraduate and law degrees from Loyola University in Chicago. He is a partner with the Chicago law firm of Thompson Coburn. Cullerton and his wife, Pamela, live in Chicago and have five children.

James F. Clayborne, Jr. (Democrat) was elected Senate Majority Leader in January 2009. First sworn in as a Senator representing the 57th Legislative District in 1995 to serve the remaining term of the late Sen. Kenneth Hall, Senator Clayborne was elected to a full term in 1996 and re-elected in November 2014.

Senator Clayborne is an active member of the Illinois State Board of Investment and the Autism Task Force. He was recognized as Legislator of the Year by the St. Louis Regional Chamber and Growth Association for four consecutive years, and received the Trailblazer Award from Minority Business Enterprise Input Committee of the Chicago Minority Supplier Development Council, Inc.

Clayborne was born Dec. 29, 1963, in St. Louis, Missouri, and raised in East St. Louis. After graduating from Tennessee State University in 1985, he earned his J.D. in 1988 from the University of Miami School of Law in Coral Gables, Florida. He served as an assistant state's attorney and a felony prosecutor in St. Clair County before practicing law in the private sector.

Senator Clayborne is a partner with the law firm of Clayborne, Sabo and Wagner, LLP, of Belleville. He has four sons and two granddaughters and resides in Belleville.



James F. Clayborne, Jr.
Senate Majority Leader



Christine Radogno
Senate Republican Leader

Christine Radogno (Republican) began serving her fifth term as the Illinois Senate Republican Leader in 2017. Leader Radogno is the first female Caucus Leader in Illinois General Assembly history, first elected by the body in 2009.

Leader Radogno represents the 41st Legislative District, with communities in DuPage, Will and Cook counties. She has been a member of the Senate since 1997.

Leader Radogno is a state budget expert leading the drive to stabilize the state's economy. During her tenure, Leader Radogno has been a key figure in negotiations that led to significant reforms in the state's workers' compensation laws; public employee pension reform to save taxpayers and protect the system's sustainability; restoring discipline and accountability to the state's borrowing and contracting practices; and ethics reforms.

A former social worker, Leader Radogno has shown her dedication to creating a responsible health care system in Illinois, including reform of the state's Medicaid system to improve services, cut costs and enact efficiencies.

Leader Radogno remains focused on improving the state's economy, working to bring stability and structural reforms that make Illinois competitive.

Senator Radogno received her bachelor's and master's from Loyola University Chicago. She and her husband, Nunzio, have adult children and five grandchildren.

Office of the Speaker of the House

The Speaker of the House of Representatives derives responsibility and influence over legislative activities through statutes, constitutional mandates and House rules of procedure. Chosen by members of the House, the Speaker invites participation from a wide range of philosophies from members of both parties in determining a legislative agenda.

As the presiding officer of the House, the Speaker determines when the House will meet and what type of business it will conduct. As manager of debate on bills, resolutions and amendments, the Speaker is responsible for recognizing members, formally calling votes, deciding parliamentary issues and maintaining decorum in the House chambers.

The comprehensive duties of the office include managing all House offices, facilities, professional and clerical staff, custodians and security personnel. Administratively, the Speaker signs and authenticates all acts, proceedings, orders, writs, warrants and subpoenas issued by the House.

In organizing a team to help ensure smooth operation of House proceedings, the Speaker selects the Majority Leader, Deputy Majority Leaders and Assistant Majority Leaders. The House Majority Leader serves as party spokesperson and assists with the flow of legislation. The Speaker may appoint chairs and majority members of standing committees, which are the public forums of proposed legislation.

Traditionally, the Office of the Speaker of the House has a profound bearing on the effectiveness of Illinois government and citizen representation in the state.



Michael J. Madigan
Speaker of the House

Michael J. Madigan (Democrat) was re-elected Speaker of the House in January 2017, a position he has held for all but two years since 1983. In August 2017, Madigan will become the longest serving State House Speaker in the history of the U.S. He has also served as House Democratic Leader and House Majority Leader.

As Speaker, Madigan has worked to build consensus, improve the quality of life for residents across all regions of Illinois and address Illinois' most pressing issues in a cooperative and bipartisan manner. He advocates for honest, efficient government and has fought to strengthen the financial security of middle-class families. Under his leadership, the Legislature has enacted sweeping ethics laws, the first campaign finance limits in state history, and needed reforms to the state budget process and workers' compensation system.

Madigan is focused on addressing the state's budget deficit and protecting critical services for the elderly, disabled and struggling families, and other vulnerable residents.

Madigan is also leading House Democratic efforts to enact reforms that grow the economy while strengthening the middle class. Madigan refuses to believe the only way to create jobs is to cut wages and strip away workplace protections. Instead, he is leading an effort to pass reforms that level the playing field for small- and medium-sized employers, invest in businesses that invest in Illinois, and help families keep more of what they earn by expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit and raising the minimum wage.

Madigan is working to increase state assistance for elementary and high schools and invest in Illinois' public colleges and universities.

Speaker Madigan was first elected as a delegate to the 1970 Constitutional Convention and then as a state Representative the same year. He was born April 19, 1942, in the district

he now represents. He graduated from the University of Notre Dame and Loyola University Chicago School of Law and practices law in Chicago.

Madigan and his wife, Shirley, have three daughters, a son and four grandchildren.



Barbara Flynn Currie
Majority Leader

Barbara Flynn Currie (Democrat) is the first woman Majority Leader in the history of the General Assembly, a position she has held since 1997. As the second-ranking House official, she serves as party spokesperson and assists with the flow of legislation, working in a bipartisan manner to address the challenges facing Illinois.

Representative Currie joined the House in 1979. Her legislative accomplishments include sponsorship of the Illinois Freedom of Information Act and the Illinois Earned Income Tax Credit. She has fought to protect those who blow the whistle on corrupt public officials, toughen revolving door prohibitions on former state employees and prohibit sexual harassment in the workplace.

Currie has sponsored legislation to make it easier for Illinois residents to vote by allowing online voter registration, create an individual retirement savings account system for private sector workers, reform the state's juvenile justice system and expand the protections of the Equal Pay Act.

Currie graduated with honors from the University of Chicago, where she also earned a master's in political science. She serves on the board of directors of the American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois and is a member of the League of Women Voters, American Association of University Women and the Sierra Club.

Representative Currie has two children and four grandchildren. Her late husband, David P. Currie, was the Edward H. Levi Distinguished Service professor at the University of Chicago Law School.

Jim Durkin (Republican) was first elected House Minority Leader in August 2013. He served in the House from 1995 to 2002, when he became the Republican nominee for the U.S. Senate. He returned to the General Assembly in 2006 when he was elected to represent the 82nd District.

In 2008-09, Representative Durkin served as the ranking Republican on the House Special Investigative Impeachment Committee that recommended impeachment and removal from office for former Governor Blagojevich. During the 99th General Assembly, Durkin sponsored the Illinois firearm trafficking law to keep illegally acquired guns out of the hands of gang members. He also successfully negotiated property tax freeze legislation and legislation to combat Illinois' heroin crisis. Prior to being elected Republican Leader, Durkin served as an Assistant Republican Leader, was a member of the Illinois Task Force on Gang Violence, fought to protect children from sexual predators and is a founding member of the Illinois Legislative Diabetes Caucus.

Durkin received his bachelor's from Illinois State University and his law degree from The John Marshall Law School. He is a former assistant Cook County state's attorney and assistant attorney general, and currently a partner with the law firm of Arnstein and Lehr, LLP.

Representative Durkin and his wife live in Western Springs with their family.



Jim Durkin
Republican Leader