



Hello friends & neighbors,

I hope you all have a warm and healthy holiday with your loved ones! My office will be closed from December 24th to January 3rd.

Tour at Dynamic Utility Solutions

On Monday I toured Dynamic Utility in Carol Stream to discuss how to bolster the pipeline for electric trades. Dynamic Utility Solutions is a Latina owned utility contractor. I am always excited to visit Latina owned businesses in the suburbs.



Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus Foundation Conference

Last weekend the Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus Foundation had a great conference to celebrate our legislative wins, community organizers and future leaders with our scholarship luncheon. A special shout out to the Caucus Foundation Co-Chairs Senator Pacione-Zayas and Representative Avelar for organizing our great event.



LSW Webinar on January 10th at 6pm

Our office will be hosting a webinar on the new requirements which have simplified getting your LSW in the state of Illinois as of January 1st, 2022 due to SB1632. Representative LaPointe, Kyle Hillman of the NASW Illinois and the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation will be co hosting this with us. You can register in advance for this webinar:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8441111111?reg..WN_kfHm8EhxS3SWes58Q-TDeg

Small Business Spotlight

The Illinois Minority Business Development Agency Business Center just opened their main office in Elgin! Terrie Simmons is the owner of Strategic Exceptions and now the President of the Illinois Minority Development Agency Business Center. You can find assistance and upcoming events through the Illinois MBDA [here](#).



Energy Assistance for Winter

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and the Citizens Utility Board are reminding residents to apply for \$200 million remaining in utility assistance under Gov. JB Pritzker's Help Illinois Families initiative – an expansion of the Low-Income Household Energy Assistance Program under the American Rescue Plan. Designed to support Illinois' most vulnerable families, the program will help cover the cost of heating and energy bills, including expanded benefits provided this year from \$750 to \$1,000, on average per household. To learn more and to fill out a new remote application, visit helpillinoisfamilies.com.

Illinois Rental Assistance

Vulnerable renters and landlords have already received \$505 million of emergency rental assistance, as Illinois leads the nation in distributing this federal funding faster than any other state to help more than 57,000 households. The Illinois Housing Development Authority will open a new round of assistance Dec. 6, and the Illinois Department of Human Services is currently accepting applications for rental assistance. Struggling households can find resources [here](#). The application will close on January 9th!

COVID-19 Booster Shot Expanded Eligibility

Following the Food and Drug Administration's decision to open COVID-19 booster shots to all, the Illinois Department of Public Health is recommending anyone 18 years and older get a COVID-19 vaccine booster dose six months after receiving their second Moderna or Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, or two months after receiving the one-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine. The best protection against the recently emerged Omicron variant is getting fully vaccinated and getting a booster shot. Visit <https://www.vaccines.gov/> to find a safe, free and convenient COVID-19 booster vaccine near you.

Grants Available for Community Projects

The Federal Economic Development Administration's Economic Adjustment Assistance program will help hundreds of communities across the nation plan, build, innovate and put people back to work through construction or non-construction projects designed to meet local needs. \$500 million is available to fund an estimated 300 projects. There is a rolling deadline with a suggested submission date of March 31, 2022. Webinars and more information can be found [here](#).

What's Next?

Our office partners with State Representative Maura Hirschauer and co-runs four advisory committees: Environmental and Agriculture, Mental Health, Seniors, and Education. These committees are a limited public forum led by volunteer chairs and seek to create compassionate conversation among the voices of the 25th/49th districts in order to help build our legislative agenda and grow our knowledge in these areas.

My staff and I look forward to hearing from you. I encourage you to reach out to us at 630-326-9319 (English), 630-326-9419 (Spanish) or constituentservices@senatorvilla.com.

Be well!



Karina Villa, MSW
State Senator, 25th District