

# CHAMBER DAY 2020

## BIOGRAPHIES OF SPEAKERS



### CONGRESSMAN DARIN LAHOOD

Congressman Darin LaHood, born and raised in Peoria, serves the constituents of the 18th District of Illinois. Sworn into the US House of Representatives on September 17, 2015, LaHood quickly transitioned into office after his special-election win on September 10. He won re-election to serve his second full-term in Congress on November 6, 2018, defeating his opponent with 68-percent of the vote.

The 18th District spans 19 counties across central and west-central Illinois, ranging from McLean County (Bloomington-Normal) to Adams County (Quincy). LaHood serves close to 710,000 constituents.

Prior to his election to Congress, LaHood served four years in the Illinois State Senate, beginning in 2011. LaHood spent more than nine years as a State and Federal Prosecutor. From 2001-2006, he worked for the U.S. Department of Justice as an Assistant United States Attorney in Las Vegas, Nevada. LaHood has also served as an Assistant State's Attorney in Cook County and Tazewell County. From 2006 up until his election to the House of Representatives, he practiced with the Peoria law firm of Miller, Hall & Triggs.

LaHood's record throughout his public service has resonated a strong, conservative record, promoting economic development and fiscal responsibility. LaHood has been an outspoken advocate for creating a better business climate in Illinois to boost the state and national economy, to create jobs for Illinoisans.

LaHood currently serves on the House Ways and Means Committee after being selected by his colleagues in January of 2018. The Ways and Means Committee is the House's oldest committee and has jurisdiction over all taxation, trade and tariffs, and other revenue-raising measures. He serves on the Ways and Means Subcommittees on Tax Policy and Oversight.

LaHood also serves on the U.S. Joint Economic Committee and is a member of the US-Cuba working group. He currently co-chairs the US-China working group, the U.S.-Brazil Caucus, the Digital Trade Caucus, the U.S.-Lebanon Friendship Caucus, and the Congressional Soccer Caucus.

Recognizing the need for reform, LaHood has fought to increase transparency and promote ethical behavior. He looks to build a strong, pro-growth economy, while fighting to reduce a record deficit that threatens the future of our children and grandchildren.

LaHood, a third generation Peorian, graduated from Spalding High School. He earned a B.A. from Loras College and holds a J.D. from The John Marshall Law School. In 2013, he was selected as an Edgar Fellow, a program run by former Governor Jim Edgar, which highlights future Illinois leaders. In 2008, LaHood was recognized in Peoria as a 40 Leaders Under Forty award winner. An avid runner, he has completed five marathons.

# CHAMBER DAY 2020

## BIOGRAPHIES OF SPEAKERS



### SENATE PRESIDENT DON HARMON

In January 2020, Don Harmon was elected by his colleagues to serve as the 39<sup>th</sup> President of the Illinois Senate, vowing to lead a new era of ethical progress as the Senate works to rebuild trust in public service and rationalize state tax policy.

Harmon, an Oak Park native, was first elected to the Illinois Senate in the fall of 2002. During his time in the General Assembly, he championed early childhood education, ethics reform, curbing gun violence, protecting civil rights and expanding voter access.

He also worked to protect Illinois' natural resources, promote renewable energy and enhancing economic opportunity for all.

Harmon was an early supporter of Preschool for All programs and sponsored the Illinois Early Learning Council.

Harmon led efforts to win legislative approval of the Fair Tax constitutional amendment that will give voters the opportunity to overhaul the state's antiquated tax system.

In the Senate, he previously served as president pro tempore and chaired the influential Executive Committee.

Harmon has an undergraduate degree from Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois and a law degree and MBA from the University of Chicago. He was a founding member of the Boat Drink Caucus band, a bipartisan group of lawmakers who set aside politics to perform at small venues across the state.

He and his wife, Teresa, are the parents of three children: Don, Frances and Margaret.

# CHAMBER DAY 2020

## BIOGRAPHIES OF SPEAKERS



### HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADER JIM DURKIN

With a focus on protecting and strengthening families and communities, Jim Durkin has spent his entire career working for the citizens of Illinois. Jim was born into a large Chicago family of eight boys. Raised in the western suburb of Westchester, Jim and all seven of his brothers graduated from Fenwick High School. He attended Illinois State University and earned a degree in Criminal Justice, and completed his formal education by receiving his Juris Doctor from the John Marshall Law School. Following his graduation from law school, Jim served as an Assistant Illinois Attorney General. Jim continued his public service as an assistant Cook County state's attorney. While working as an assistant state's attorney, Jim served in the felony trial and narcotics bureaus. Jim currently practices law in the City of Chicago.

In January 1995, Jim became an Illinois State Representative in the 44th district. In 2002, Jim was the Republican nominee for United States Senate but was unsuccessful in his bid to defeat U.S. Senator Dick Durbin. In 2006, Jim was appointed to fill a vacancy in the 82nd House District and has successfully run for re-election. Jim served as the ranking Republican on the Illinois House of Representatives Special Investigation Committee for the impeachment of Governor Blagojevich in 2008, and in 2012 served as the House Manager for the removal of a sitting member of the Illinois House of Representatives.

In August of 2013, Jim was unanimously selected by his Republican colleagues to fill the vacancy of House Republican Leader and was officially inaugurated by the full House of Representatives on October 22, 2013.

During the 100th General Assembly, Jim worked tirelessly with members on both sides of the aisle to successfully negotiate a new education funding formula for our state. Now the law of the land, Senate Bill 1947 ensures that all students across Illinois receive adequate and equitable school funding regardless of where they live or income status. Jim was also the chief sponsor of Senate Bill 1722 which now gives judges the ability to crack down on repeat gun offenders by giving harsher penalties. This measure will reduce gun violence plaguing communities across our state.

Jim's dedication to the people of Illinois has earned him several honors. Throughout his career, he has been bestowed several awards and recognitions such as Legislator of the Year (Builders Association, 2016), Friend of Agriculture (Illinois Farm Bureau, 2016), Outstanding Legislator of the Year (Illinois Association of Park Districts 2015 and MS Society of Greater Illinois 2014), Family Legacy Award (Illinois Crime Commission 2014) and several more throughout the last two decades.

In 2000 and 2008, Jim was State Chairman for U.S. Senator John McCain's presidential campaigns and served as Chairman for the Illinois Delegation at the 2008 Republican National Convention in Minneapolis. Jim currently serves on the John Marshall Law School Board of Trustee's, Misericordia Board of Advisors, Giant Steps of Illinois Board of Directors and JDRF Illinois Board of Directors.

Jim currently resides in Western Springs with his wife and family.

# CHAMBER DAY 2020

## BIOGRAPHIES OF SPEAKERS



### SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER BILL BRADY

Senator Bill Brady was elected by his peers as Senate Republican Leader in August 2017. He has served the residents of the 44th District as their State Senator since May 2002, and prior to that served as State Representative for the 88th District from 1993 to 2001. He currently serves on the Senate Executive Committee.

During his tenure as a legislator, he has worked to increase education accountability and funding, and sponsored reforms of workers' compensation and medical malpractice laws. He has championed reforms in the state's insurance and financial industries that became a national model, sponsored laws that promote highway safety through more training for young drivers and led the way in efforts to restore integrity to state government, ensuring the best use of the taxpayers' dollars.

Bill Brady was born May 15, 1961, in Bloomington, Illinois. He graduated from Central Catholic High School and Illinois Wesleyan University. Over the course of his professional career, he has founded and operated several businesses, mostly focused in the areas of housing development and marketing.

Bill and his wife Nancy live in Bloomington. They have three adult children and three grandchildren.

# CHAMBER DAY 2020

## BIOGRAPHIES OF SPEAKERS



### CURTIS DUBAY

Curtis Dubay is the Lead Economist at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Prior to that he was Senior Economist at the American Bankers Association and Research Fellow in Tax and Economic policy at The Heritage Foundation. He has also worked at the accounting firm PwC and the Tax Foundation. Dubay has researched and published frequently on a wide range of tax and economic issues. He is frequently quoted by the press and has appeared regularly in the media, including on CNBC, Fox News, Fox Business, MSNBC, CNN and C-SPAN. He has testified before Congress several times and was cited in newspapers such as The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, The Washington Post, USA Today, and Politico. Dubay received his master's degree in economics from the University of Connecticut and his bachelor's degree from the University of Richmond. He resides in Washington, DC with his wife and three sons.

# CHAMBER DAY 2020

## BIOGRAPHIES OF SPEAKERS



### RYAN GLEASON

Ryan Gleason is Manager of Congressional and Public Affairs at the U.S. Chamber's Great Lakes Regional Office. To achieve the U.S. Chamber's public policy goals, Ryan cultivates and maintains legislative, political, media and grassroots resources throughout Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, and Pennsylvania.

Ryan helps lead the U.S. Chamber's efforts to strengthen its relationships with Members of Congress through member businesses, associations, and local and state chambers of commerce across the region.

Before joining the U.S. Chamber in October 2019, Ryan spent five years working in Washington, D.C. He first started working in federal affairs for Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner and representing Illinois at the federal level. Most recently, Ryan worked at a government affairs firm advising clients on financial services, taxation, and tech issues. Ryan originally got his start working in the Illinois House of Representatives.

Meanwhile, Ryan has worked on a number of local, state, and federal campaigns, including two successful gubernatorial campaigns in Illinois and Missouri in 2014 and 2016, respectively.

Ryan is a graduate from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, double-majoring in Economics and Political Science. Aside from his time in Washington, D.C., Ryan has been a lifelong resident of Illinois and currently resides in Chicago.