

# ADVOCACY REPORT

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1919-2019

ILLINOIS  
CHAMBER

STRONGER BUSINESS  
STRONGER ILLINOIS

## ILLINOIS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2019 ANNUAL LUNCHEON

Thank you to all of our attendees, sponsors, exhibitors, special guests, and staff for a successful Centennial Celebration! Nearly 500 people attended this year's annual luncheon at the Palmer House in Chicago on September 26.

Though Governor Pritzker was unable to make the celebration due to injury, guests enjoyed a special welcoming address from him via video.

Chamber Chairwoman of the Board and Advocate Aurora Health Vice President of Government and Community Relations Meghan Woltman interviewed keynote speaker IBM Chief Marketing Officer Mani Dasgupta on global technology and the changing business landscape.



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Darch helped establish and then lead the Chamber Amicus Brief Program, a groundbreaking effort to ensure business interests are represented in front of the judicial branch.



## REINHART CHAMPION OF FREE ENTERPRISE AWARD

The Chamber awarded Partner at Baker Mackenzie Doug Darch with the 2019 Reinhart Champion of Free Enterprise Award for his momentous contributions to the business community in Illinois over the past year.



As a Chamber board member and chair of their Legal and Judicial Committee, Darch helped establish and then lead the Chamber Amicus Brief Program, a groundbreaking effort to ensure business interests are represented in front of the judicial branch. The program submits briefs to

Illinois' appellate and supreme courts on issues of critical importance to the broader business community.

The award, named after former Chamber Chairman Tony Reinhart, was announced and presented at the Illinois Chamber of Commerce's Centennial Celebration Annual Luncheon at the Palmer House in Chicago on September 26.

*Pictured: Illinois Chamber of Commerce Board of Trustees Chairwoman and Vice President of Government and Community Relations at Advocate Aurora Health Meghan Woltman and Partner at Baker Mackenzie Doug Darch at the Palmer House in Chicago on September 26.*



*We were joined by many past chairmen who continue to support the Chamber's mission and vision.*

*Pictured back row left to right: Ray Drake, Doug Whitley, Former President and CEO Illinois Chamber of Commerce, Ray Neiswander, III, Bill Beck; front row left to right: Matt Gamba, Joe Dively*



*Mayor of Decatur Julie Moore Wolfe, Chairman of the Chicago Bears George McCaskey, Chamber President and CEO Todd Maisch*





“

A fair economy ceases to exist when one company convinces the government to ensure their profits at the expense of others and the public.

”

—Todd Maisch on electricity bills, *Chicago Sun Times*

## ENERGY OP ED

Illinois Chamber President and CEO Todd Maisch wrote an op-ed on how proposed legislation could lead to higher electricity bills published in the *The Chicago Sun-Times* on September 5.

“A fair economy ceases to exist when one company convinces the government to ensure their profits at the expense of others and the public.”

[Read the full article here.](#)

### Two bad energy bills in Springfield would jack up your electricity bill



Energy Progress Act and the Clean Energy Jobs Act would lead to unnecessarily higher electricity bills, according to the Illinois Chamber of Commerce. | Getty

...t the summer and into the fall, the nuclear industry and like-minded advocates are urging the passage of massive legislation that would implement aggressive changes to Illinois' energy economy — with costly impacts to energy consumers.

## EDIE AWARDS

In September, the Chamber announced men's suits manufacturer Hart Schaffner Marx (HSM), and the creator of gluten free pizzas Urban Farmer as the recipients of our 11th Annual Economic Development in Illinois Awards.

This year's winners were chosen for their strong commitment to expanding their businesses in Illinois, keeping and creating jobs and improving our economy for the greater good.

The Edies' sponsor Nicor Gas presented the awards to the winners on stage during the Chamber's Annual Luncheon Centennial Celebration at the Palmer House in Chicago on September 26.

[You can read more about the awards and the winners here.](#)



*Pictured: City of Des Plaines Director of Community & Economic Development Mike McMahon and Urban Farmer Senior Administrator Sharon Ouwenga pose with their Edie awards.*



“

The Illinois Chamber is very honored to be here today. Quincy is really the place where the Illinois Chamber of Commerce got its start a hundred years ago. Business leaders from across the state came to Quincy to launch The Chamber.

”

[Watch here.](#)

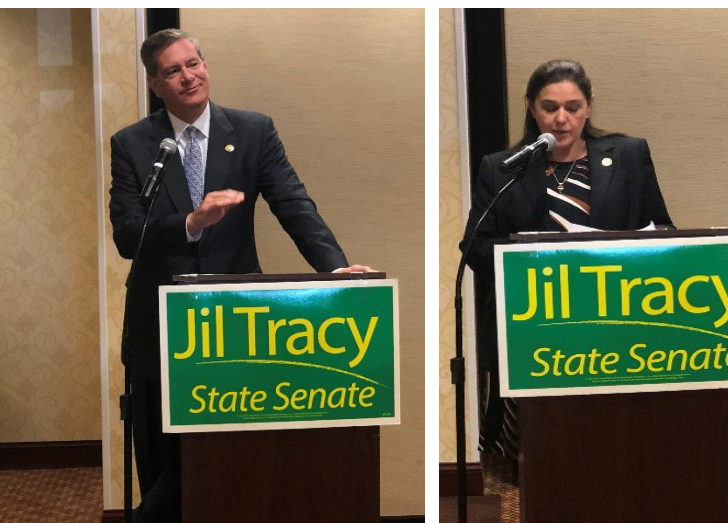
—Todd Maisch on the Chamber’s centennial, KHQA



State Representative Randy Frese, State Senator Jil Tracy, Executive Director the Quincy Area Chamber of Commerce LaTonya Brock, Chamber President and CEO Todd Maisch and Quincy Mayor Kyle Moore.

## ILLINOIS CHAMBER RECEIVES QUINCY PROCLAMATION

Quincy Mayor Kyle Moore declared September 23, 2019 as ‘Quincy Chamber Day’ with a proclamation presented to Illinois Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Todd Maisch, celebrating the powerful role Quincy played in the formation of the Illinois Chamber of Commerce 100 years ago. Illinois State Senator Jil Tracy, Illinois State Representative Randy Frese and Quincy Area Chamber of Commerce Executive President LaTonya Brock spoke at the event on the special relationship the Illinois Chamber has with Quincy businesses.



## SENATOR TRACY A TIRELESS ADVOCATE FOR ILLINOIS

Illinois Chamber President and CEO Todd Maisch gave a legislative update to a packed house for an event for Illinois State Senator Jil Tracy in at the Holiday Inn in Quincy on September 23. Senator Tracy has been a tireless advocate for Illinois businesses throughout her time in the legislature, not just for the hard-working people of Quincy but throughout the state.





“

The incentives were designed to attract the kind of large, hyperscale developments needed by companies like Apple, which in 2017 decided to place a new 400K SF, \$1.3B hyperscale data center just outside of Des Moines in Waukee, Iowa, a state that had a robust set of incentives.

”

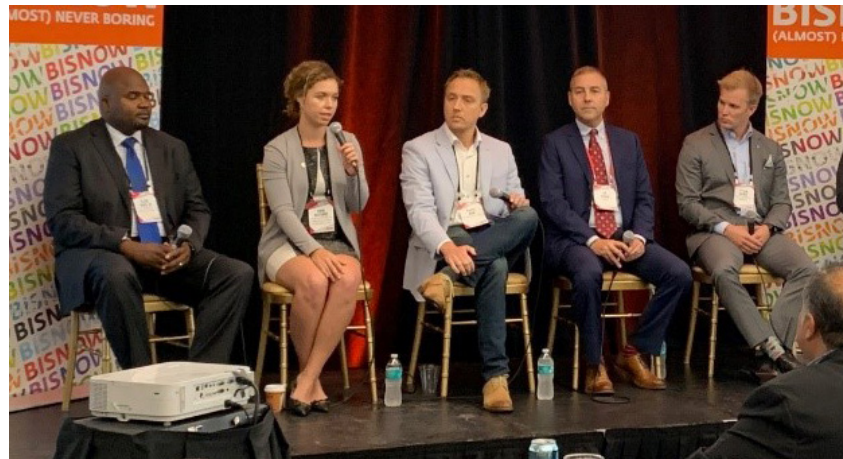
—Tyler Diers on data centers, Bisnow

[Read full article here.](#)

## CHAMBER TECH JOINS BISNOW PANEL

Leader of the Chamber’s Tech Council Tyler Diers joined DCEO Director Erin Guthrie and other participants in a BISNOW panel on Illinois’ new data center incentives on September 17 in Chicago. The Chamber-backed program will generate thousands of new high paying IT and construction jobs and strengthen our tech ecosystem.

*Pictured: Illinois State Senator Elgie Sims Jr., Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Director of Erin Guthrie, Digital Realty Vice President of Portfolio Management Rafal Rak, ComEd Manager of Economic and Business Development Ed Sitar, Illinois Chamber of Commerce Director of Legislative Relations Tyler Diers.*



## REPRESENTATIVE CHARLIE MEIER ROUNDTABLE

Chamber Director of Legislative Relations Tyler Diers participated in State Representative Charlie Meier’s 108th District Business Roundtable series. The roundtable events included an update on new laws impacting businesses, the recent probusiness reforms passed by the legislature, a brief General Assembly update, and open discussion. Roundtable events took place at Chamber-member the Korte Company in Highland, The Maschoffs in Carlyle, and in O’Fallon.



“

I've heard there will be an attempt to “fix” this legislation in the fall veto session. All I know at this juncture is that there is no easy fix.

”

[Read full article here.](#)

—Keith Staats on Illinois' sales tax law, *Insight Magazine*

## Illinois Chamber Graduated Income Tax Resource Center

On behalf of our members and businesses throughout the state, the Illinois Chamber is dedicated to providing information, resources and advocacy to help fight the constitutional amendment that would overturn our current fair flat income tax.

A graduated income tax would be devastating for businesses, workers and growth in Illinois. The Chamber is dedicated to educating Illinois voters on why the constitutional



## GRADUATED INCOME TAX

Executive Director of the Chamber Tax Institute Keith Staats and Chamber Director of Legislative Relations Tyler Diers gave a presentation to the Peoria Chamber of Commerce on graduated income tax issues on September 12 in Peoria.

In May 2019, the legislature approved a ballot referendum question calling for a constitutional amendment to change Illinois' constitution from a flat income tax to a graduated income tax. As a result, voters will be asked in the upcoming 2020 election whether Illinois should amend the constitution to move from a flat tax income to a graduated income tax.

The Illinois Chamber will continue to educate community leaders, business people and most importantly, the public until the vote. [Click here for more information.](#)

## STAATS DISCUSSES AMENDMENTS TO ILLINOIS TAXES

Executive Director of the Chamber Tax Institute Keith Staats discussed the impact of the amendments to the Illinois Retailers' Occupation Tax and Use Tax in his latest column in the Illinois CPA Society's *Insight Magazine* published in September.

[Read full article here.](#)

# INSIGHT

## TAX DECODED

### Illinois' Incomprehensible Sales Tax Law

A post-Wayfair fix for leveling the playing field between online and brick-and-mortar retailers has made Illinois sales tax more unbalanced.







“

Having that cross road is really well positioned for manufactures who want to come here and create a product and want to get it around the world.

”

[Read full article here.](#)

—Rebecca Mason on the Rochelle transportation Center, NBC 13

## INFRASTRUCTURE COUNCIL HOLDS MEETING AT PORT DISTRICT IN CHICAGO

The Illinois Chamber Infrastructure Council held their quarterly meeting September 17 at the Illinois International Port District in Chicago. Senators Sandoval and Dewitte and Representatives Evans, Jones and Smith all addressed the group. Additionally, Port Director Clayton Harris spoke about the significant economic benefits the port brings to the area and the greater Chicago region.

Quarterly Meeting sponsor Christopher Burke Engineering and State Representatives Jones, Smith, and Evans toured the Illinois International Port District to hear about the economic impact the port has on the surrounding area.



Pictured: Kay Whitlock, Christopher Burke Engineering; Rep. Thaddeus Jones; Rep. Nick Smith; Quinton Scott, Rep. Nick Smith's office; Rep. Marcus Evans; Darren Olson, Christopher Burke Engineering

## ROCHELLE RAILROAD BRIDGE OPENING

Executive Director of the Chamber Infrastructure Council Rebecca Mason joined officials from Washington DC, Chicago, and Springfield for the grand opening of the new industry transportation center in Rochelle on September 13.

Mason spoke at the event that unveiled the new Transload Center and Railroad Bridge will help make Rochelle as cost-effective destination for new industries, jobs and investment.



# CHAMBER ADVOCACY



IN THE NEWS

*Fighting for Business Every Month*

*In the month of September, we spoke to radio, television, and print media outlets, delivering pro-business values to audiences across Illinois. Below is a selection of stories where the Chamber has advocated its position on a variety of topics.*

## CHAMBER

- [September 23 marked “Quincy Chamber Day”](#) – Todd Maisch Spoke

## ILLINOIS ENERGY

- [Two bad energy bills in Springfield would jack up your electricity bill](#) – Todd Maisch
- [Scientist Group To Host ‘It’s Getting Hot In Here’ Forum in Normal](#) – Todd Maisch mentioned
- [Battle brews over Ill. shift away from coal](#) – Todd Maisch mentioned

## HISTORICAL FACTS ABOUT THE CHAMBER

- [Quincy leader urged creation of Illinois Chamber of Commerce](#)

## CANNABIS

- [Quad Cities Chamber to hold panel on legal marijuana](#) – Tyler Diers mentioned
- [Into the haze: how will legal marijuana affect employers and workers?](#) – Tyler Diers quoted

## TECHNOLOGY

- [Recession-Proof? Data Center Expansion To Continue Even In Market Slowdown As New Tech Transforms U.S.](#) – Tyler Diers mentioned

## INFRASTRUCTURE

- [Rochelle celebrates infrastructure](#) – Rebecca Mason quoted



Chamber Member **Universal Technical Institute** received the ACCSC's 'School of Excellence Award' award and UTI-Lisle Education Manager Justin Doerries was recognized individually as ACCSC's top educator of the year - an honor given to just one instructor annually.

[Read more here.](#)

Chamber member **Amazon.com** committed to opening a 237,000 square foot delivery station in Skokie later this year.

[Read more here.](#)

**Amazon** also announced they will continue to invest in Illinois with 400 tech jobs in Chicago.

[Read more here.](#)

Daniel L. Goodwin, principal and chairman of Chamber member **The Inland Real Estate Group LLC**, penned an editorial in the Chicago Tribune on how NIU is protecting students and faculty in demonstrating their first amendment rights.

[Read more here.](#)

Chamber member **Uber** is making Chicago the center of their bold plans to expand in freight. Their commitment to invest \$200 million annually and hiring an additional 2,000 workers in Chicago shows their confidence in the talented people and their focus on transportation in Illinois. Thank you Uber for making Illinois a better place to work and live.

[Read more here.](#)

