

Secretary Of State Rolls Out New Laws Including Road Safety, Libraries

New Year, New Laws: Giannoulis Rolls Out New Measures to Improve Government Efficiency, Increase Road Safety and Protect Libraries

Initiatives Passed by the Illinois General Assembly Will Take Effect January 1, 2026

"This past legislative session delivered some big wins for Illinoisans that will make a real difference in their everyday lives," Giannoulis said. "These laws move us closer to our goals of making our roads safer, ensuring our libraries have the tools they need to serve their communities and creating a more efficient and responsive government."

They include:

Road Safety and DMV Modernization

New multi-pronged legislation provides clarification on cheating on DMV exams, allows the office to administer written tests online and enhances bicycle safety.

The measure clarifies that any attempt to have someone else provide answers to an individual taking a DMV exam, including attempts to use a hidden microphone or cell phone, constitutes cheating.

It also enhances the office's Rules of the Road publication to include information about the laws and best practices for safely sharing the road with bicyclists and pedestrians. In addition, it requires that before passing a cyclist, a driver of a vehicle must make a lane change.

HB 2983 was sponsored by State Representative Edgar González Jr. (23rd District - Chicago) and State Senator Steve Stadelman (34th District - Rockford).

Enhancing Library Security

Amid an alarming increase in threats of violence to libraries and librarians across Illinois, the Secretary of State's office can now issue security grants for libraries throughout the state, ensuring their

ability to provide a safe environment for patrons, employees and the community.

Under the new law, grant applicants have the ability to request funding to install equipment, including security cameras, silent alarms or security checkpoints.

SB 1550 was sponsored by State Senator Laura Murphy (28th District - Des Plaines) and State Representative Michael Coffey Jr. (95th District - Springfield).

Cracking Down on Rogue Towers

This legislation, which the office supported, strengthens oversight of towing companies to protect Illinoisans from predatory practices.

The law empowers the Secretary of State's office to suspend tow truck registrations for companies that fail to pay Illinois Commerce Commission fines or penalties. It also improves consumer protections during towing and vehicle impoundment, including clarified rules around personal property left in towed vehicles.

SB 2040 was sponsored by State Senator Celina Villaneuva (12th District - Chicago) and State Representative Will Davis (30th District - East Hazel Crest).

Enabling Court of Claims E-Filing

A new law will modernize the way the Illinois Court of Claims operates, transforming it from a court currently reliant on paper filings and in-person sessions that can cause delays.

The measure will save time and create new conveniences for Illinoisans by enabling the court to hold sessions remotely and allowing the public to file claims, provide evidence or testimony, and pay fees electronically.

HB 1576 was sponsored by State Representative Terra Costa Howard (42nd District - Lombard) and State Senator Michael Halpin (36th District - Rock Island).

Giannoulis Warns Of Text Scams

Illinois Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulis is calling on Illinoisans to remain vigilant for fraudulent text messages claiming they owe money for traffic violations or tolls.

Scam texts, which have surfaced recently, typically claim that the recipient's vehicle registration or driving privileges are at risk of suspension and prompt immediate action through a link. These messages are phishing attempts designed to instill fear as a means of stealing money or personal information.

"Phishing scams continue to be a persistent threat, especially during the holiday season, with criminals repeatedly attempting to steal Illinoisans' personal information and

hard-earned money," Giannoulis said. "These messages are designed to look legitimate, which is why it's important for residents to remember that our office will never contact them by text about license or registration issues. Ignoring and reporting these scams helps protect everyone."

The Secretary of State's office sends text messages only to remind customers about scheduled DMV appointments. It does not send texts related to driver's license status, vehicle registration issues or enforcement actions.

Illinoisans who receive scam messages are encouraged to report them to the Federal Trade Commission by visiting reportfraud.ftc.gov.

THE CLASSIFIEDS

FOR SALE

FOR SALE: 2016 Toro 50-inch Zero Turn riding mower with steering wheel. Bought new. Looks and runs great - \$1,600. 711 LaPrairie Rd., Sparland - (309) 361-0192. tfc-p

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FOR RENT: 2-Bedroom apartment in Lacon. New carpeting, new paint. No pets, no smoking a must! \$650 a month plus deposit. Water, sewer and garbage included. Phone (309) 361-3042. 20-tfc

TWO BEDROOM DUPLEX APARTMENT FOR RENT IN HENRY, IL - This is a HUD Subsidized apartment for senior citizens (62+ yrs) or disabled individuals (50+ yrs). You must have 2 or more in the family and meet eligibility requirements. Appliances, water & garbage included, located at The Henry Home Association on Stoner Drive. Call (309) 356-1112 or TTY users dial (800) 526-0844. "This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer." 38-tfc

MISC.

WANTED TO BUY: Antiques, collectibles, furniture, toys, post cards, hunting and fishing items, decoys, duck calls, fishing lures, coins, etc. Call Greg at 815-303-6173. 4-52c

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(ANSWERS ON PAGE 4)

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Sketch
- 5 Old name for France
- 9 Microwave
- 12 Top-of-the-line
- 13 Golden Rule preposition
- 14 "As I see it," in a text
- 15 Lady of Spain
- 16 Teen fave
- 17 Stannum
- 18 Out of control
- 19 Pool unit
- 20 Faction
- 21 Humorist
- 23 Follower (Suff.)
- 25 Cerebral
- 28 Car safety feature
- 32 Tree bumps
- 33 Unfettered
- 34 Closed tight
- 36 Outlaw
- 37 Summer in Paris
- 38 Flavor enhancer, for short
- 39 Asp shaper
- 42 Pair
- 44 Now, in a memo
- 48 Rock producer Brian
- 49 TV's Griffin
- 50 Painter Magritte

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| 12 | | | | | 13 | | | | 14 | |
| 15 | | | | | 16 | | | | 17 | |
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| 25 | 26 | 27 | | | | | 28 | | 29 | 30 |
| 32 | | | | | | | | 33 | | |
| 34 | | | | | 35 | | 36 | | | |
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| 39 | 40 | 41 | | | 42 | 43 | | | 44 | 45 |
| 48 | | | | | 49 | | | | 50 | |
| 51 | | | | | 52 | | | | 53 | |
| 54 | | | | | 55 | | | | 56 | |

- 51 Thesaurus wd.
- 52 DLI doubled
- 53 Partner
- 54 Chopper
- 55 Diminutive suffix
- 56 Dance move
- 8 Texter's guffaw
- 9 Tubular pasta
- 10 During
- 11 Corn concoction
- 20 Coerces
- 22 Map feature
- 24 "The Da Vinci Code" monk
- 25 Small ammo
- 26 Wish undone
- 27 Coach
- Parseghian
- 29 Physique
- 30 "- was saying ..."
- 31 Retrieve
- 35 Sense
- 36 Low-budget flick
- 39 Small plateau
- 40 Cameo stone
- 41 Single
- 43 Legal document
- 45 Plane reservation
- 46 Pot starter
- 47 Incubator noise
- 49 Bovary's title (Abbr.)

BRIDGETOWN EVENTS

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- ♦ Meetings



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- ♦ Parties
- ♦ Banquets

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NOTICE TO THE ELDERLY AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES FOR THE MARCH 17, 2026, GENERAL PRIMARY ELECTION

Citizens who are not registered to vote and cannot leave their home or nursing home because of permanent disability may arrange for voter registration by contacting the office of the Marshall County Clerk.

Any qualified registrant may register to vote at the office of the Marshall County Clerk located at 122 N. Prairie of the Marshall County Courthouse, Lacon, Illinois from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Two forms of identification are required to register. The last day to register to vote for the General Primary Election is February 17th, 2026 (except for grace period registration and transfer of registration beginning February 18th and ending March 17th, 2026) in the office of the Marshall County Clerk.

All polling places in Marshall County are accessible to people with disabilities. Voting aids and assistance in marking the ballot are available if needed. If you are physically unable to vote at your polling place on Election Day, you may vote absentee in person in the office of the Marshall County Clerk, or absentee by mail. The last day a ballot can be mailed from the office of the County Clerk is March 12th, 2026. The last day to vote absentee in person in the office of the Marshall County Clerk is March 16th, 2026.

For information concerning absentee voting, voter registration, or voting for the elderly or disabled, please contact the office of the Marshall County Clerk & Recorder Office at (309) 246-6325 press 2 then 1.

Jill M. Kenyon

Marshall County Clerk & Recorder

