

Chicago Tribune



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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

Lawmakers to wrangle over taxes, insurance

Final days of session will tackle leftover questions

By **Jeremy Gorner,**
Olivia Olander
and **Olivia Stevens**
Chicago Tribune

SPRINGFIELD — Democrats who control the Illinois General Assembly head into the final days of the spring legislative session with several of the major initia-

tives Gov. J.B. Pritzker laid out in his February budget proposal, from about \$900 million in tax hikes to legislation challenging the insurance industry, still unresolved.

Tax increases on sportsbooks and corporations, which Pritzker's office says are needed to both balance the budget and maintain the state's trend of credit upgrades, could be sticking points as legislators negotiate the governor's \$52.7 billion budget proposal. Acknowledging pushback from lawmakers,

many of whom are up for reelection in November, the governor's office has warned state agencies to prepare for cuts to an array of state services.

But at the same time, there is no shortage of interests lobbying for more money. The Chicago Teachers Union and the city's public school system are seeking an increase in funding. While the CTU has pushed for \$1.1 billion it says is needed to fully fund the city's schools, Chicago Public

Schools says it would settle for a \$550 million statewide increase in school funding, which remains well above the \$350 million Pritzker has proposed.

Two large unions — the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees and the Service Employees International Union's local outfits — are fighting to get wage increases for their members included in the final budget after they were snubbed in the governor's original proposal.

Crowding the agenda while not formally on it, the Chicago Bears are trying to persuade Pritzker and the legislature to back public funding for a new lakefront stadium, and the White Sox also want taxpayers to help with a new ballpark. The governor has called the Bears' proposal a "nonstarter," and no legislation to facilitate any sports stadium plan has been filed. Pritzker last week reiterated

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Bodo Stolczenberger, a plate room technician, records newsprint traveling through a press during the last Freedom Center press run of the Chicago Tribune on Saturday. Stolczenberger posts videos to a Facebook group of current and former Chicago Tribune press operators. **VINCENT ALBAN/CHICAGO TRIBUNE PHOTOS**

Freedom Center's final edition

Massive plant that prints Chicago Tribune makes last production run

By **Robert Channick**
Chicago Tribune

When the heavily used presses at the Freedom Center geared up over the weekend to print the Sunday Chicago Tribune, it gave new meaning to the term final edition. After 43 years of spewing out countless millions of newspapers, the production run was the last for the Chicago Tribune at the massive plant along the Chicago River.

The largest newspaper printing plant in North America is coming down. Chicago's first casino will go up in its place.

Downsizing to a suburban facility, the Tribune will print on. But the imminent demise of the Freedom Center marks



Terry Ford, a day shift press supervisor, gives a tour of the Chicago Tribune Freedom Center to his daughter, Nicole Ford, and his wife, Anne Ford, before the last Freedom Center press run of the Chicago Tribune on Saturday. He started as a part-timer at the Freedom Center in 1983.

the end of an era, as newspaper circulation declines turn once-bustling printing plants into the buggy whip factories of the digital age.

Freedom Center is being demolished to make way for a planned Bally's Chicago Casino complex. Tribune Publishing is moving its printing operations to the northwest suburban Daily Herald plant, a smaller but newer facility it purchased in May 2023 for an undisclosed price.

The Monday edition of the Chicago Tribune will be the first in the newspaper's storied 177-year history not printed in Chicago, bearing instead a made-in-Schaumburg imprimatur.

"It's kind of bittersweet," said Scott LaBadie, 55, of South Holland, a 32-year Freedom Center veteran press operator working the night shift Saturday. "I have the ironic duty of doing the last edition here at the Freedom Center, and tomorrow

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In Nation & World

Helicopter with Iranian president missing: A helicopter carrying Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, the country's foreign minister and other officials apparently crashed in the mountainous northwest reaches of Iran, sparking a massive rescue operation in a fog-shrouded forest as the public was urged to pray.

Trump trial on track for jury deliberation this week: Testimony in the hush money trial of former President Donald Trump is set to conclude in the coming days, putting the landmark case on track for jury deliberations that will determine whether it ends in a mistrial, an acquittal — or the first felony conviction of a former American president.

Cyberattacks on Ascension, Lurie are latest in a string of health care breaches

By **Lisa Schencker**
Chicago Tribune

First, they went after Lurie Children's Hospital in Chicago. Next, cybercriminals attacked Ascension, a large nationwide health system with 14 hospitals in Illinois.

In both cases, the hospital systems kept providing care, but took down their electronic health record systems and MyChart online patient portals.

It took more than a month for Lurie to get all of its systems

back online after the January cyberattack. Ascension — which rescheduled some nonemergency surgeries and temporarily diverted some ambulances as a result of a hack earlier this month — is still untangling the mess.

"We are focused on getting systems back up and running as safely and as quickly as possible," Ascension said in a statement Wednesday. "Please be aware that it may still take some time to return to normal operations."

Lurie and Ascension are hardly alone when it comes to battling

increasingly sophisticated cybercriminals going after health care organizations. Last year, a record 725 large health care security breaches were reported to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights, according to the HIPAA Journal, which covers news related to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. The number of large, reported health care breaches increased by 93% between 2018 and 2022, according to the health and human services department.

"They keep coming," said Ashraf Shehata, U.S. Sector Leader for Health Care for KPMG, an accounting and advisory firm. "When there's a successful attack, you're going to see more and more and flow into that space."

Cyberattacks have been a problem facing many industries for years. But health care systems are particularly attractive targets for cybercriminals because of their size, their dependence on

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TODAY'S WEATHER



High **86** Low **66**

Complete Chicagoland forecast on Page 10

\$4.00 city and suburbs and elsewhere
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