

WJBM RADIO

QUARTERLY ISSUES

STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS AND HOW THEY ARE ADDRESSED

Filed April 10, 2021

Period January 1, through March 31, 2021

PUBLIC FILE QUARTERLY ISSUES

WJBM has found through personal contact in the community that the following issues need to be addressed on an ongoing basis.

1. **COVID-19** Most important issue effecting everyones lives. Not only the effect, but confusion for our residents. Living so close to St Louis and the differences between Missouri and Illin causes mixups on how people need to respond.
2. **WEATHER** Severe winter weather weather has caused a number of incidents in the local area. Extreme and prolonged cold and snow have presented many travel problems and cancellations.
3. **AGRICULTURE** Although fewer people live on the farm in this market area than ever before, agriculture is still the most important part of the local economy. Those not involved in farming express concern about farm subsidies and how they are applied.
4. **EMERGENCY COVERAGE** TV is available from the neighboring St. Louis area. But resources are limited for covering local event.
5. **SCHOOL NEWS** The activities at schools seem to always be expressed as important. Especially now with remote learning and cancellations. School funding in Illinois is also a statewide topic and that shows up in local concerns as well.
6. **RELIGION** People express their concerns of getting information out to the community about the church activities. There are concerns over numbers of members in the churches, and the effects of aging on participation in the churches and parishes in the community.
7. **SOCIAL SERVICES** With changes in the Medicare program, access to the program has become a widely discussed topic. Access to social programs and also the lack of knowledge about what is available is also expressed.
8. **ILLINOIS COST OF LIVING** New taxes and higher regulatory fees exceed the cost of living in neighboring states and is forcing long time residents to consider moving out of the area.
9. **LOCAL NEWS** There is no daily newspaper printed within the market area of WBBA, (Pike, Scott, Greene, Brown and Calhoun Counties). This gives WBBA coverage of local news, alerts, boil orders, emergency announcements added importance.
10. **Death Notices** Always important in our rural community, the death notices are important since we are the only daily media source, but with cancelled services because of covid-19, info on deathes is especially important.

PUBLIC FILE – PROBLEMS ADDRESSED

This is a listing of what WJBM is doing to meet the needs of the local community address in the quarterly issues list.

1. Covid-19 continues to dominate our local coverage in 2021. attention is now turning more toward vaccine and getting people immune. News stories are leading us to believe we could be returning to normal by mid year.
2. RFD Radio network carries a regular series of programs on state tourism along with agriculture subject matter, in addition to the local segments that are aired in our local news.
3. Through the winter period we are the area's instant source for closings and cancellations. We are prepared to update round the clock and maintain a web page that also delivers this important information.
4. We broadcast a comprehensive array of farm related programs, with over 100 each week. To offer various perspectives and to get the complete story to our listeners we are affiliated with these networks, Brownfield Farm Network, RFD Radio Network, Doane-Agritalk, and the tribune radio network. The combination of all of these networks is designed to give farmers a broad perspective on the changing marketplace, and also inform the non farming segment of the audience about this important segment of our local and national economy. The only local grain market report that ties together all area terminals is aired 3 times daily.
5. To more thoroughly inform our audience we are streaming specialty feature programming. We do this for information and sports, but not music. This is also aided by a comprehensive web site to re-enforce our broadcast information.
6. We air a combination of news and public affairs programs that deal with the health care issues of the community. Including all major health providers in our area. Daily newscasts feature the stories on health services, times and dates for clinics, and general reports on health news. Our local hospital also does a long form interview program every week that goes into detail about health issues.
7. A full line-up of church programming airs each week on Sunday. This is a combination of locally produced church programs, live services, and prepared programs. This is programming that is designed to serve the people who find it hard to get out to their church, and also helps to give public awareness to those listening about the churches that are on the air.
8. We offer long form programs that also serve as interview time on the air to more fully explain the services. We carry local newscasts on the hour at 6am, 7am, 8am, noon and in the late afternoon to keep the community informed on the local news on a daily basis. For news information we also subscribe to a number of network services to gather our news from. They include Metro Source, IRN, RFD Radio Network, and Illinois Information Service.
9. We carry a program each morning (when families are preparing for the day), that shares the information on area school newsletters, their calendar of events, and also the school breakfast and lunch menus. We dedicate time in our local newscasts that publicizes the upcoming school board meetings.

10. We have established our programming to be a first choice for emergency information in our region. We have made direct connections with the officials at the Health Department and the Hospital to get Hazmat reports on the air immediately in the event of an emergency that could be associated with response to rail, barge, air, or truck disasters. We are prepared to give evacuation announcements if and when they are required.

Region 3, which includes the Tri County area, will face restrictions beginning on Sunday in hopes of slowing the spread of the coronavirus. Indoor service at bars and restaurants will be prohibited, with only outdoor service allowed.

Local lawmakers insist that there is no evidence to justify targeting bars and restaurants for new mitigations.

Republican Representative CD Davidsmeyer and GOP Senator Steve McClure say the Pritzker administration has not produced data showing that bars and restaurants are responsible for the surge in cases. State public health officials say contact tracing data and information from the CDC indicates that indoor dining and drinking are the most common activity cited by people who later test positive for COVID.

Sen. McClure says a phone conversation with the Governor's office seems to contradict that notion....

Play "nuzcrt1.wav"

Republicans like Rep. Davidsmeyer are demanding that lawmakers be brought back for hearings and to have input on the pandemic restrictions.

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This week, state police announced officers issued a total of four citations to businesses in Bond, Madison, Monroe and Macoupin counties for defying the state's restrictions, a fine that could cost a business \$2,500.

The state announced 6,943 new COVID-19 cases---another daily record high--- and 36 deaths Friday. The total number of cases in Illinois now stands at 402,401 since the beginning of the pandemic, with 9,711 deaths.

Locally, the Greene County Health Department reported 10 new cases on Friday, 81 are active.

Illinois is losing a seat in congress. Preliminary data from the 2020 U.S. Census indicates that the number of Illinois members in the US House of Representatives will drop from 18 to 17. Illinois is one of seven states that will have less representation in DC due to declining population numbers. States gaining a seat in congress include Texas, Florida, Colorado and North Carolina.

State Senator Steve McClure has advanced legislation to ensure elected sheriffs can be sworn-in without delay. In 2018, Sangamon County briefly went without its elected sheriff due to a quirk in state laws. Senator McClure has filed and passed legislation to fix the issue. Current state law requires an elected sheriff to be sworn in on the first day of the month where the office is required to be open. In some years, that will not be the first day of the month. Senate Bill 135 changes state law so that a newly-elected county sheriff enters the office on December 1st, regardless of what day of the week that falls on. McClure's legislation passed the Illinois Senate and is now headed to the Illinois House.

Governor JB Pritzker says Illinois could be moving to the new "Bridge" phase in less than a week. One metric has been met...70 percent of seniors vaccinated, but the rising number of cases and hospitalizations has kept mitigations stagnant so far. Daily totals have started to decrease or at least hold steady, so it's possible the state could move to the Bridge phase, which comes before fully reopening, in the next five or six days. The latest daily totals are more than 21-hundred new cases and over two thousand COVID patients in the hospital. The State Department of Public Health has confirmed in excess of 25-hundred cases of COVID variants in Illinois.

The state is launching a new program to help expand COVID-19 resources and access to the vaccine. The Pandemic Health Navigator program is designed to offer guidance through one on one connections at the local level. Navigators are there to answer community questions about the virus and vaccine, to dispel myths, to direct people to vaccination sites and to make sure those in quarantine have access to things like groceries. A recent survey by the Illinois Public Health Association found that 21 percent of residents would not be getting a COVID-19 shot.

Secretary of State Jesse White is reminding motorists that they may drive without an up-to-date license plate sticker affixed to their license plate if they have their receipt showing they purchased a sticker online before the expiration date. The receipt, which is generated after an online sticker purchase, is valid for no more than 30 days from the expiration of the previous license plate registration sticker's date. Over the last two days of the month in March, more than 36,500 customers visited Driver Services facilities to purchase license plate stickers. During this same two day period, 73,000 customers purchased their license plate stickers online at www.cyberdriveillinois.com.

This is Work Zone Awareness Week. There are about 64-hundred crashes in work zones each year in Illinois, injuring 17-hundred people and killing 34. Some buildings and bridges across the state will be lit up in orange this week to honor the people who died in road construction zones in Illinois.

Gov. J.B. Pritzker announced all Illinoisans 16 years old and up will be eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine in a little less than a month, on April 12th. There may be other groups of individuals that will be eligible before April 12th. Another announcement by the Governor was the move to a "Dial" phase between Phases 4 and 5. The Dial Phase will require 70% of seniors to be vaccinated with stable health metrics. That number is currently 58%. To move to Phase 5, 50% of all residents 16 and up will need to be vaccinated, 28% are currently vaccinated.

Legislation has been introduced that would offer homeowners some relief from hefty property tax burdens. Senate Bill 1745 would establish a property tax credit for middle-class earners. Starting in 2022, this measure would allow homeowners to deduct 5 percent, or up to \$5,000, from the assessed value of their home. Any Illinois household with an income of less than \$131,772 would qualify for the homestead exemption. The bill was scheduled to be heard in the Senate Revenue Committee today.

It is a good bet that Illinoisans are going to drop some cash on the NCAA basketball tournament, but it won't be on any team from the state. The University of Illinois is one of the tournaments number one seeds, and Loyola of Chicago also made the field, but the state bans betting on in-state college teams. Of the 21 states that allow sports gambling, 13 prohibit betting on the state's college teams. ~~The American Gaming Association expects over 47 million people will bet on the NCAA tournament between filling out brackets and placing wagers on the games.~~ The website Odds.com projects Illinois will take in around \$188 million dollars on the tournament.

A shortage of teachers continues to be a problem across Illinois, but new legislation at the Capitol aims to begin addressing the issue. HB 655 would get rid of the current requirement for would-be teachers to pass written performance tests, otherwise known as educative teacher performance assessments (EDTPA). Another bill, SB 808 that passed the Senate last week would eliminate another current requirement for teaching candidates to film themselves while in the classroom with students. The bill to eliminate written teacher assessments is still waiting for a vote in the House. The bill to get rid of the required teaching videos passed the Senate and now awaits a vote in the House.

The Illinois Senate has passed a bill which establishes a teacher and principal mentoring program. Teachers and principals in their first and second years would be able to qualify for the program beginning in 2025, but the Illinois State Board of Education would prioritize funding for districts that need it the most. The initiative comes as a result of the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus' Education and Workforce Pillar in an effort to increase minority participation in the education system. The bill, which passed by a 36-17 vote, is headed to the House for consideration.

Getting vaccinated against COVID-19 will get you free admission to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum. Throughout May and June, anyone who has received at least one shot can obtain a free ticket from the museum website. You will be required to show a vaccination card upon arriving at the museum to use the ticket. To get a free ticket, simply go to the "Buy Tickets" section of the website and select the day and time you want to visit. Then for the type of ticket, choose the free COVID option.

Turnout is expected to be significantly lighter for Tuesday's local elections than they were during the presidential contest back in November. There are a handful of contested races on the ballot... including a race for Mayor of Grafton, and Jersey Township Clerk. There are two spots open on the Board of Trustees at Lewis and Clark Community College as well. The polls are open until 7pm.

The executive director of the Illinois State Board of Elections is on administrative leave after he reported that he was the victim of an attempted online extortion scheme. Steven Sandvoss reported the incident to the Illinois State Police, which is investigating. A statement from the board says that out of an abundance of caution, the eight members of the elections board voted unanimously to place Sandvoss on leave and to open an internal investigation into the security of systems to which Sandvoss had access. The statement says there is no indication that any election data or information has been compromised.

Lawmakers in an Illinois House committee are picking up on things the previous General Assembly attempted to address but was sidetracked last year by COVID-19. Efforts to address how to stem unethical behavior were derailed amid the pandemic. Monday, the Illinois House Ethics and Elections Committee heard about the varying degrees of several ideas. One proposal would prohibit lawmakers leaving the legislature and immediately working as a lobbyist. Another area the hearing focused on was economic disclosure forms. Another focused on the definition of lobbying. Lawmakers didn't act on any bills and scheduled another hearing about conflicts of interest, the Legislative Inspector General and Ethics Commission.

Former Illinois congressman Ray LaHood has stepped down as head of the governing board for the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, after his admission that he failed to disclose accepting foreign money while serving as U.S. Transportation Secretary. LaHood paid a \$40,000 fine and agreed to repay the \$50,000 he accepted as a "loan" from an associate of a foreign billionaire under federal investigation for influence peddling. LaHood also acknowledged failing to disclose the payment on federal ethics documents and making "misleading" statements to investigators. LaHood had been named to chair the board in the aftermath of the firing of the library and museum's executive director over his improper handling of a rare copy of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address.

The Illinois Emergency Management Agency is encouraging families to include their kids in any disaster planning. Getting children to help build an emergency supply kit and plan a practice fire drill can help them feel safer when a disaster does strike. A number of online resources that make disaster preparedness fun for kids including the National Fire Protection Association and Federal Emergency Management Agency's websites. Additionally, FEMA and the American Red Cross offer the "Prepare with Pedro" activity book for kids and their families.

Gov. Bruce Rauner plans to sign a spending plan he admits doesn't pay off the states debts or have reforms to reduce taxes.

One of the two "no" votes in the Senate, Republican state Sen. Kyle McCarter, said despite what some say, the \$38.5 billion budget isn't balanced because it doesn't address pensions and other debt.

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Following the House passing the plan, Rauner acknowledged the plan does not include "much-needed debt paydown and reforms that would reduce taxes," but said he'll sign it anyway.

House speaker Michael Madigan said in a statement the budget creates a \$15 million surplus that will be used to pay down old bills. With the state having more than \$6.6 billion in backlogged bills, that would take more than 440 years.

THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES IS URGING BOATERS TO BE CAREFUL OUT ON THE WATER THIS SUMMER.

THERE WERE 80 BOATING RELATED ACCIDENTS IN ILLINOIS LAST YEAR...LEAVING 48 PEOPLE HURT AND 12 DEAD. D-N-R SPOKESPERSON ED CROSS SAYS BOATING SAFETY BEGINS WITH A SOBER DRIVER.

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STATE LAW REQUIRES ANYONE UNDER THE AGE OF 13 TO WEAR A LIFE JACKET WHEN BOATING AND THERE MUST BE ENOUGH LIFE JACKETS ON BOARD FOR ALL PASSENGERS. EVERYONE, REGARDLESS OF AGE, MUST WEAR A LIFE JACKET WHEN JET SKIING.

THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES IS URGING BOATERS TO BE CAREFUL OUT ON THE WATER THIS SUMMER.

D-N-R SPOKESPERSON ED CROSS SAYS STATE LAW REQUIRES KIDS UNDER 13 TO WEAR A LIFE JACKET WHILE BOATING...AND THERE NEEDS TO BE ENOUGH LIFE JACKETS STOWED AWAY FOR EVERYONE ON BOARD. HE ALSO REMINDS THAT JUST LIKE ON THE ROAD...DRUNK DRIVING ON THE WATER IS AGAINST THE LAW.

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LAST YEAR IN ILLINOIS...CONSERVATION COPS ARRESTED 145 BOATERS FOR DRUNK DRIVING.

A leading lawmaker accused of abusing an advocate has resigned his leadership position but says his accuser is lying because she's upset with him. Cole Lauterbach has more.

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A high-ranking Democrat resigned from several leadership positions Thursday after being publicly accused of harassment, inappropriate behavior and retaliation by a former medical cannabis advocate. Cole Lauterbach has more.

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Some Illinois community colleges are a step closer to being able to offer four-year nursing degrees.

~~The battle over the future of nursing school in Illinois is headed for a final vote this week.~~ An Illinois House panel on Monday approved Senate Bill 3025, which would allow some community colleges in the state to offer four-year nursing degrees.

Lewis and Clark Community College President Dale Chapman told lawmakers that community colleges can create a pipeline to hospitals in smaller, and rural communities.

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Nurses can become RN's with just a two-year associates degree. To become a BSN (Bachelor of Science in Nursing), they must have a four-year degree.

But the state's four year universities and nursing schools don't like the idea. Sue Clark is with the American Nurses of Illinois, the state's largest nursing group.

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The House panel approved the expansion on a 6-3 vote.

The full Illinois House is expected to vote on the idea before the end of the week.

The Senate approved a plan to address the teacher and substitute shortage that is causing issues in schools across downstate Illinois and in rural areas.

The Senate approved the measure Tuesday.

House Bill 5627 encourages educators outside of Illinois to apply for hard-to-fill jobs, creates a short-term substitute teaching license and allows downstate retired teachers to substitute in classrooms without jeopardizing retirement benefits.

The Senate also approved another measure allowing substitute teachers to provide evidence of physical fitness to districts so they do not have to pay for the cost of an exam.

The goal is to reduce costs for prospective substitute teachers so more can get into the system and help under-staffed schools.

HOUSE LAWMAKERS ARE APPROVING A 72 HOUR WAITING PERIOD FOR THE PURCHASE OF GUNS IN ILLINOIS.

CURRENT LAW ONLY REQUIRES THE THREE-DAY WAIT FOR HANDGUNS...BUT THIS LEGISLATION FROM REPRESENTATIVE JOHNATHAN CARROLL COVERS ALL TYPES OF FIREARMS. HE SAYS THE IDEA IS TO PREVENT SOMEONE FROM RUSHING OUT AND GETTING A GUN TO CAUSE HARM.

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THE BILL STILL NEEDS TO BE OKAYED BY THE SENATE AND THE GOVERNOR.

NEW DAILY CORONAVIRUS CASES IN ILLINOIS REACH OVER ONE THOUSAND FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MORE THAN A MONTH.

THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH IS ANNOUNCING ONE THOUSAND 18 NEW CASES. THE LAST TIME THE STATE SAW THAT KIND OF NUMBER WAS ON JUNE FIFTH. BUT GOVERNOR J-B PRITZKER TOLD A CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE ON WEDNESDAY THAT OVERALL, THERE HAVE BEEN BIG IMPROVEMENTS.

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AROUND 15-HUNDRED COVID PATIENTS ARE CURRENTLY IN THE HOSPITAL, INCLUDING 317 IN THE I-C-U AND 153 ON VENTILATORS. OVER THE PAST SEVEN DAYS, LESS THAN THREE PERCENT OF THOSE TESTED WERE POSITIVE FOR THE VIRUS. LOCALLY, JERSEY COUNTY HEALTH OFFICIALS ARE NOW REPORTING 40 POSITIVE CASES OF COVID-19.

NEW DAILY CORONAVIRUS CASES IN ILLINOIS REACH OVER ONE THOUSAND FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MORE THAN A MONTH.

ONE THOUSAND 18 NEW CASES ARE BEING REPORTED, BRINGING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CASES IN ILLINOIS TO MORE THAN 150 THOUSAND. STILL... GOVERNOR J-B PRITZKER SAYS THAT CASES ARE DOWN 71 PERCENT FROM THE PEAK OF THE PANDEMIC, AND LESS THAN THREE PERCENT OF THOSE TESTED HAVE BEEN POSITIVE FOR THE VIRUS.

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THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH IS REPORTING 20 ADDITIONAL DEATHS, RANGING IN AGE FROM 40'S TO 90'S. MORE THAN 71-HUNDRED PEOPLE IN ILLINOIS HAVE LOST THEIR LIVES TO THE CORONAVIRUS. LOCALLY, JERSEY COUNTY HEALTH OFFICIALS ARE NOW REPORTING 40 POSITIVE CASES OF COVID-19.

Nearly 38,900 Illinoisans filed for unemployment benefits last week. Illinois' unemployment claims decreased from the week prior, when 45,752 new claims were filed. The U.S. Department of Labor reports more than 1.3 million filed for unemployment across the country last week.

Another hearing has been set in the case state Rep. Darren Bailey partially won against Gov. J.B. Pritzker's COVID-19 orders. The governor wants the judge to rule moot claims Bailey made about the definition of a disaster that the judge didn't grant last week. The Clay County judge did grant Bailey counts saying the governor's orders beyond the initial COVID-19 order are void after April 9. The next hearing is July 17 in Clay County.

New daily coronavirus cases in Illinois totaled over one thousand for the first time in more than a month. One thousand 18 new cases are being reported, bringing the total number of cases in Illinois to more than 150 thousand. The Illinois Department of Public Health is reporting 20 additional deaths. More than 71-hundred people in Illinois have lost their lives to the coronavirus. Locally, Jersey County health officials are now reporting 40 positive cases of COVID-19.

An Illinois county that did not have any confirmed cases of the coronavirus has reported its first one. A 66-year-old woman tested positive for the virus in Scott County last week and was reported to be recovering at her home. Out of 102 counties in the state, Scott County was the only one left that did not have any cases after Edgar County had its first reported case in May.

Just days after announcing that high school coaches and athletes could move to a wider variety of drills and workouts, the Illinois High School Association is rolling back some of those changes. In new guidance issued to schools Thursday, the IHSA said an increase in positive COVID-19 cases among high school teams around the state prompted the move. Contact drills, which had just been authorized earlier this week, are once again prohibited, raising questions about how football teams can prepare for a possible fall season. The revised rules also require players and coaches to wear masks at all times, although that rule apparently won't apply to outdoor drills if social distancing is observed.

The Gateway Arch National Park in St. Louis will delay Phase II access originally scheduled to begin this week, due to an increase in confirmed COVID-19 cases in the State of Missouri. Phase II includes the reopening of the Tram Ride to the Top and Documentary Movie as well as outdoor National Park Service programming. These attractions will remain unavailable until further notice. The park will reassess this data on a weekly basis until a Phase II reopening date is set. Outdoor spaces, visitors center, museum, store and cafe at Gateway Arch National Park remain open.

When the Illinois House reconvenes, Speaker Mike Madigan will introduce a resolution removing 2 statues and a portrait as well as moving a statue of Martin Luther King Jr to a more prominent spot. Speaker Madigan said "Memorializing people and a time that allowed slavery and fostered bigotry and oppression has no place in the Illinois House." The portrait being removed is that of Stephen Douglas who beat Lincoln in the 1858 senate race, a statue of Douglas would also be removed and the portrait would be replaced with Former President and Illinois Senator Barack Obama. The other statue being removed would be of Pierre Menard.

The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum welcomed its five millionth visitor just days after the museum reopened to the public. Visitor No. 5,000,000 was Regina Padgett of Orlando, Fla. She received a family membership in the presidential library's foundation and \$150 worth of gifts from the museum store and the Springfield Convention & Visitors Bureau. The museum opened April 19, 2005. The museum was closed for three-months due to during the coronavirus pandemic.

The president of Leading Age Illinois, the 2nd largest nursing home association in the country, is warning of complacency during the coronavirus pandemic. Kevin Bessler reports

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Another lawsuit has been filed over the state's plan to require face coverings and temperature checks for students to return to classrooms this fall.

A Quincy woman is suing the school district there, arguing that the rules are unlawful and saying it should be left to parents, not the state or school district, to decide if their child wears a mask.

The plaintiff is represented by attorney Thomas DeVore, who has filed several lawsuits over the state's rules to slow the spread of coronavirus.

There are massive ongoing problems with the state's unemployment assistance program during the pandemic... but some problems at the Department of Employment Security go back farther than that.

A state audit criticizes the agency for a lack of procedures to protect sensitive data from cyberattack.

The audit covers a period from 2017 to 2019, and it's unclear how the findings relate to a reported data breach earlier this year.