

ENTERCOM RADIO GROUP
ISSUES AND PROGRAMS REPORT
FOR
STATION WBBM-AM and HD
FOURTH QUARTER, 2020
OCTOBER 1 THROUGH DECEMBER 31

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**ISSUES OF CONCERN TO CHICAGO
ADDRESSED IN RESPONSIVE PROGRAMMING IN THE
FOURTH QUARTER 2020**

1. Business and Job Development: Creating an economic climate that supports small business and entrepreneurs. Provide assistance to develop new businesses and jobs in distressed economic areas.
2. Crime and Violence: Support of community policing efforts in Chicago, efforts to reduce gang activity and the spread of gangs into the suburbs, ensuring that the police department operates legally and with respect the communities it serves.
3. Neighborhood and Suburban Development: Efforts within the City of Chicago to promote neighborhood cohesion, economic opportunities and housing. Infrastructure concerns.
4. Civil Rights: Enforcing legal rights and developing respect for different races and ethnic groups as well as religious differences; gay and lesbian issues; immigration issues.
5. Family Issues: Helping to maintain stable families; parental education; finding permanent homes for children in state care.
6. Health Care: Providing adequate facilities for health care, particularly indigent care; providing affordable health care and access to services. Dealing with the Covid-19 crisis.
7. Voter Information: Helping voters make personal election decisions by giving insights into those that are running for offices in upcoming elections.
8. School Reform and Education: Efforts to improve student performance and achievement, making sure teachers are performing well in the classroom and general educational issues in Chicago and suburbs.

WBBM NEWSRADIO 780
PROGRAMS THAT ADDRESS COMMUNITY ISSUES

1. At Issue: (Sundays, 9:30am and 9:30pm Duration: 30:00)
Locally produced interview show featuring top newsmakers discussing state and community issues.
2. Made in Chicago: (Mondays, 6:51am, 10:52am, 4:51pm, Saturday, 2:55am, 6:55am, 3:55pm, 7:55pm, Duration 1:00) In-house produced feature spotlighting manufacturing and service companies in Chicago and its suburbs. Topics are chosen based on the worldwide reputation of the goods made or the unique stories of the entrepreneurs that founded the companies.
3. Bloomberg Small Business Report: (Tuesday & Thursday, 5:52am, 10:52am, Saturday, 7:55am, and 10:55am; and Sunday, 8:25am, 2:25pm, 4:25pm and 7:25pm. Duration 1:00) Produced by Bloomberg, this feature focuses on issues affecting small business and entrepreneurs.
4. Report on Religion: (Sunday, 12:41p, 5:20p, 7:41p. Duration 2:00)
CBS Radio Network feature focusing on news from various religious faiths and denominations and discussing faith-inspired viewpoints on current issues.
5. Face the Nation (Sundays, 11:30am and 11:30pm. Duration 30:00) Weekly interview program produced by CBS News that discusses top issues of the day from a national perspective with people who are making news on those issues.
6. WBBM News: Programming at all times of day and night during the quarter covered many angles of Covid-19, the impact on peoples' lives, and what organizations were doing to help. This programming also included live coverage of news conferences on a regular basis by Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker.

I. BUSINESS AND JOB DEVELOPMENT

At Issue

November 1, 2020

Guest: Sam Toia, President Illinois Restaurant Association

15 minutes out of 30-minute program

This portion of the program dealt with the impact of Covid-19 on the restaurant industry. Toia said the year began with 594,000 people working at more than 25,000 eating and drinking establishments in Illinois. He said before the latest shutdown of indoor dining, it was expected 25 percent of those restaurants would permanently close. He said with colder weather, outdoor dining won't exist, and revenues will decline 80 percent. He said while the safety of workers and guests is first, as the science evolves, so must mitigation. His group filed a legal brief, and they are involved in one lawsuit, but he said they need to focus on all 102 counties in the state. Toia said a Brown Institute study showed restaurants only account for about one percent of cases statewide. He said he believes all guests and team members should wear masks, guests should all be seated, and only take down their masks to eat. He said 99 percent of establishments are doing everything right. He said they've done everything from sanitizing to distancing, testing, requiring reservation, taking contact information, and installing dividers between spaces. He said going from 50 percent occupancy to zero doesn't make sense, but maybe reducing to 25 percent. He also said the federal government needs to step up like they did previously for the auto and airline industries.

At Issue

November 22, 2020

Guest: Karen Freeman Wilson, CEO Chicago Urban League

25 minutes out of 30-minute program

This program aired just before Thanksgiving and what's known as Black Friday and Small Business Saturday. Many were also promoting "Black Shop Friday." Freeman Wilson said the original name and idea came from an advertising firm that wanted to do something to support the Black community. She said Black owned businesses face special challenges such as access to capital or marketing dollars. She said the Chicago Urban League also helps them with technology and information on how to set up payroll systems, etc. They have a center for entrepreneurship and innovation, where individuals give advice and provided help acquiring business licenses. She said Covid-19 combined with civil unrest this year has made it hard special adding in the centuries old "pandemic of racism." She said about 40 percent of Black businesses are folding, with an especially big impact on personal service and food businesses. Freeman Wilson said a BlackShopFriday.com web site was created to help people find these businesses. She said if consumers follow the advisories, much of the business will be online. She said the site also will stay active after the holidays. She also talked about getting government contracts, saying governments could break the contracts into smaller amounts so they're easier to acquire. She also said businesses can band together to jointly get contracts. Freeman Wilson also talked about how the Chicago Urban League has a youth services division, and recently had a forum talking about mental health. They discussed PTSD, depression and other related topics. She said gun violence in many neighborhoods has led many young people to lose friends and relatives. She said they need to find a way to communicate with them, to be supportive and determine their needs. She also said the Urban League has hiring events, provides help with rent and mortgage to avoid evictions.

II. CRIME AND VIOLENCE

At Issue

October 4, 2020

Guests: Elena Quintana, Dir. Adler U Institute on Public Safety & Social Justice

Joshua Brooks, Coordinator for Restorative Justice Hubs, Chicago

Anthony Montoya, Restorative Justice Participant

30 minutes out of 30-minute program

This program featured the topic of restorative justice. Quintana called it a proactive approach that wants community members to work together to resolve conflict and engage young people to be better involved in the community. She said studies show if you keep them involved and connected to people who care about them, it works better than incarceration. Brooks said some may think this restorative activity is a slap on the wrist but that is not the case, that it is a lot of work. He said restorative justice repairs the harm caused by crime and conflicts and restores relationships. He said it gives them a sense that what they have done has caused more harm than they realized, and it strives to show people why they did what they had done, not just who did it. Quintana said society tends to marginalize people at a very early age, saying most people locked up now were suspended from school by second grad. She said we need to bring people closer to us. Montoya said his parents worked minimum wage jobs, making it difficult to take care of his siblings, and eventually joined a gang. By 16 he was on house arrest, and his parole officer assigned him to Urban Life Skills, featuring mentors and group conversations. He said each month they had to achieve certain goals. He said his mentor saw his willingness to learn and took him to this restorative justice (RJ) hub. He said there he learned about RJ and how to use it in everyday life. Many of his friends, he said, did not receive this help and wound up in jail. Brooks said this is about finding ways to help others as well as themselves. The process, he said, reveals much about the pain that was done to you, and why you inflict pain on someone else. He said RJ is not just a program, it is a way of life. Quintana said it invests more in public safety long term than just arresting and criminalizing young people. Brooks said the hubs are community led, safe places where young people can go to repair harms and repair communities. He said there are all types of circles in the hubs, from women of color, peace, LGBTQ, young men, etc. They are designed to build human potential. Quintana said they now have more than 37-hundred participants. She said many look to further education goals, others employment goals. She said this year much of the focus has been on helping people get food and shelter. She also said the safest communities are ones with the most resources, and they still need more mental health support, quality education, after school activities and employment. She said the RJ hubs help with legal services, housing and employment.

At Issue

October 11, 2020

Guest: Steve Bernas, CEO & President Chicago Better Business Bureau

30 minutes out of 30 minute program

This program talked about how to avoid scams, especially with an increased use of personal computers as people work from home. Bernas said fake websites have popped up that claim fixes or cures for Covid-19, along with fake test kits. He said sometimes now it is hard to determine fake from real. The key is looking at the URL, which may have a missing character. He said you should never click on a link through Facebook or e-mail, even if sent by a friend. Once you click, it could take control of your computer, turn on your camera or monitor your keystrokes. He talked about one site where they were allegedly selling batteries and chargers for phones, but they had no product. He said it went on for months with people putting charges on their credit cards. He also said there are a ton of fake reviews. He said one of the latest scams is consumers receiving phone calls allegedly from Amazon saying their package can't be delivered and they need information like a credit card number. He also suggested people don't put their graduation year on Facebook or someone would know how old you are and build a profile on you. He said it is not IF they'll steal your credit but WHEN. He also talked about scammer on the phone saying they're with the government and telling folks to buy gift cards and read them the numbers. Bernas said the number one scam is shopping online, and the Federal Trade Commission reported about a 250,000 complaints worth about \$157 million in losses. He also said some legitimate companies may not be well run, so you should check any company out before you make a purchase. He said many companies have bad ratings with the BBB. He mentioned charities may look legitimate but perhaps are not. Or some taking donations only give a very small amount to the charity.

At Issue

November 22, 2020

Guest: Karen Freeman Wilson, CEO Chicago Urban League

5 minutes out of 30-minute program

Freeman Wilson talked about how the Chicago Urban League has a youth services division, and recently had a forum talking about mental health. They discussed PTSD, depression and other related topics. She said gun violence in many neighborhoods has led many young people to lose friends and relatives. She said they need to find a way to communicate with them, to be supportive and determine their needs. She also said the Urban League has hiring events, provides help with rent and mortgage to avoid evictions.

III. NEIGHBORHOOD AND SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT

At Issue

November 29, 2020

Guests: Sean Garrett, CEO United Way Metropolitan Chicago

Carlos Nelson, CEO Great Auburn-Gresham Development Organization

30 minutes out of 30-minute program

This program was about how non-profits are doing with fundraising and helping the community during the Covid-19 pandemic. Garrett said the United Way has seen unbelievable compassion and resilience, with more people volunteering, and so many lines at food pantries with so many either unemployed or underemployed. He said the United Way here saw how things were developing in Seattle with various charitable organizations banding together. He said within a week in Chicago there was a fund started that raised more than \$8 million by the time schools closed. He said their neighborhood development project shifted gears and created food pantries. They began a four-year, \$50 million project to get 100,000 Chicago Public Schools students internet with a program called Chicago Connected. He said not just the student but entire families will now have internet for four years. Nelson said his group has been providing community services for more than two decades, focusing on housing and senior services, health and wellness, economic development and education and youth development. He said with the pandemic hit, they pivoted every aspect to focus on crisis response and relief. He called it astonishing how many families suffer from food instability, need rental assistance and personal protective equipment. Nelson said the development organization also won a Chicago prize of \$10 million from the Pritzker Foundation. He said part of that money went toward acquiring a 60-thousand square foot building, which they redeveloped, creating an Auburn-Gresham Healthy Lifestyle Hub. Garrett then talked about a research project about poverty. He said in Chicago, 42 percent of households work hard but barely make enough to survive. That was pre-pandemic. Now he said, even more have become reliant on food pantries. Nelson praised the United Way for providing resources around a plan developed by 15-hundred people in the communities, comprised of business owners, clergy, not-for-profits and residents. Garrett added while they need to help people meet basic needs, they also need to help people thrive. Otherwise with only basic needs met, people still struggle.

IV. CIVIL RIGHTS

At Issue

October 25, 2020

Guest: Risa Lanier, Chair Judicial Evaluation Committee of CBA

7 minutes out of 30 minute program

Lanier chairs the evaluation committee for the Chicago Bar Association. This program centered on all the judges on the ballot, which can be confusing for most voters. She said the current system of election of some judges and judges appointing associate judges has helped with diversity. While judges make decisions based on the law, Lanier said it was important for judges to understand the root causes for some of the crime that happens in communities. She said when you talk about equitable application of the law, you have to take into consideration, when making decisions about someone's freedom and life, what pushed someone into making the decision they did. She said if you understand the community they came from, that makes for better application of the law.

At Issue

November 15, 2020

Guests: Nina Sanchez, Director Enrich Chicago

Rashon Sanders Ward, Founder Red Clay Dance Company

30 minutes out of 30 minute program

This program focused on the importance of the arts in society, especially during Covid-19 and in relation to race relations. Sanchez said Enrich Chicago was founded six years ago to address the root causes of inequities seen in the arts and culture and with the ability to access such resources. She said the organization is needed to ensure that leadership in Chicago's art community and institutions reflect our communities. She said systemic racism exists in arts and culture, both with the art we see and the funding for organizations of arts. Ward said Red Clay Dance is an African American contemporary ensemble made up of seven female dancers, creating work based on African traditional dances. She said they also teach youth and adults dance forms to activate social change and community engagement. She said they did have to shut down for a while due to Covid-19, but since have returned with masks, which also requires re-learning how to breath, take frequent breaks, etc. Sanchez said groups Enrich Chicago work with rely on private funding and ticket revenue along with direct support from government. Ward said that means for her group working with Chicago, they receive funding but there are off-cycle years when you have to sit out such funding. Sanchez said the pandemic has significantly cut down their revenue streams, and while city funding is critical, Chicago is the only major city that doesn't have a line item for this type of thing in its budget, so with less tax money coming in, there's less funding going out. She added that in communities of color, access to wealth is more difficult, making any private fundraising a challenge. Ward said people also need to understand that the dancers and artists do this for their careers, that it is not a hobby, so funds are needed to feed their families and pay their bills. Sanchez added that many use art, at no cost, to help get through the pandemic. She also said artists bring more than \$30 billion to the Illinois economy each year, and the arts account for more than 5 million jobs. So she said we can choose to invest in them just like any other industry.

At Issue

December 13, 2020

Guest: Colleen Connel, Executive Director ACLU

30 minutes out of 30 minute program

Connel has led the American Civil Liberties Union since 2001. She spent time talking about claims of fraud by President Trump and Republicans. She said the voting act of 1965, to lift local barriers keeping African Americans from voting, is the most important voting rights issue handled by Congress. She said the Supreme Court five years ago gutted key provisions after hearing from Shelby County, allowing states to scale back early voting, re-enact voter ID laws. She said with the change of administration they need to elevate protection of the fundamental right of any democracy. She said while elections are local, there need to be national standards. Connel said Illinois does not have a record of trying to suppress the right to vote, and the Illinois General Assembly has enacted legislation to make it easier, such as allowing registration on election day, and allowing those jailed awaiting trial voting rights. Connel said this past summer it became clear what people of color have endured in this country. She said slavery, in many respects, has been replaced by a criminal legal system meant to repress and control people of color. She said reforms needed including strict limitations on law enforcement using lethal force. She also called for more transparency in policing practices and disciplinary procedures. Asked about police concerns of more people on the streets with guns and more police injured in shootings. Connel said two wrongs don't make a right. She said people shooting at police or acting in other violent ways does not justify lethal force in countless situations. She said this past summer we saw police use excessive force against peaceful protestors and journalists because of a few in the crowd acting unlawfully. She said the bad actions of a few just not justify lethal force against the many. Connel then touched on immigration. She said a top priority of the Biden administration will be to reunite the 545 children forcibly separated from their families at the Mexican border. She called that a gross human rights violation. She also talked about Illinois adopting the most comprehensive reproductive rights bill in the country. She said the Supreme Court needs to narrow federal constitutional and state protections regarding access to abortions and contraception. She said for organizations that object to providing contraception for employees, maybe the government could create a federal program to provide. She said with a conservative shift in the federal courts, this will be difficult. Regarding the LGBTQ community, she said the new administration could restore transgender rights to serve in the military. She said the new administration also could try to restore the interpretation of Title 9, protecting the right of transgender students to use bathrooms and locker rooms consistent with their gender identity. Connel ended by talking about freedom of speech, saying the First Amendment protects against government intrusion of free speech. But she said private platforms, such as Twitter, can lay out the rules for using their service. She called it an area of common sense and said we could all use a little more civility in our public discourse.

V. FAMILY ISSUES

At Issue

December 27, 2020

Guest: Cardinal Blasé Cupich, Archbishop of Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago

30 minutes out of 30-minute program

Cupich talked about the year 2020 as it related to the Catholic Church. He said on March 13, due to Covid-19, they closed all parishes and schools ahead of the state order and set up a task force to determine how to move forward. In all, more than 200 schools and 300 churches in Lake and Cook Counties were closed. With people wanting to embrace faith at times of crisis, Cupich said they shifted to online ministry and used science and data to decide on any reopening. But he said even now with some parishes open, people for the most part are afraid to return to church even with safety measures in place. He said food pantries have indicated the number of people coming for food has grown five-fold. He said the archdiocese has collected about \$20 million for relief efforts, plus another \$15 million for things like burial costs, domestic violence and tuition assistance. Many schools reopened in September, and he said about 85 percent of the students are in-person, while the rest are in virtual classes. He said after the holidays, they're delaying any return until January 18 to allow for quarantining after potential holiday gatherings. He said the pandemic has hurt church revenues, but said in Chicago they're doing better than much of the country, taking in about 75 percent of usual collections. He said while the typical parish is a ghost town, they've also checked to be sure each location is properly cleaned, and he said spot checks by their teams forced some parishes to close until they corrected their protocols. He then talked about what they've been doing long before the pandemic. He said when he arrived six years ago, a plan was put in place for maintenance of old buildings, and he began a program called Renew My Church. He said when parishes were built years ago, attendance was large. He said now there aren't enough priests to serve them, so they've begun consolidating and reconfiguring parishes. He wanted to reinvigorate the Catholic people and attract more to the community. He said he's not too concerned about money, that money follows mission and if you do the mission right, the money will come. Cupich then talked about the Church being outspoken about gun violence. He said we have to be sure life is protected, that people need to be more responsible. He also said people need to cooperate more with police to ensure justice is done. He also said the archdiocese has taken a much harder stance on sex abuse in the church. He said Cardinal Bernardin put together a program for a safe environment, involving a training program and cooperating with local law enforcement. He said it has served as a model for the world. He said every allegation is reported to law enforcement, and there's a victim assistance office. He said before the pandemic he held town hall meetings so people understand what they're doing to protect children.

VI. HEALTH CARE

At Issue

December 6, 2020

Guest: Adam Kinzinger, Republican Congressman, Illinois' 16th District
10 minutes out of 30-minute program

Kinzinger talked about how Covid-19 has led to more than 20 deaths at the LaSalle Veterans Home. He called that tragic, and they need to learn why this happened, mentioning they discovered hand sanitizer without alcohol in it, plus a number of staff attended a Halloween party. He said the investigation is continuing, but the US Veteran's Affairs office said they would offer help by sending an infectious disease specialist to the home because the Illinois specialist was out sick with Covid, that they're aware the Illinois specialist wasn't in place until the end of November. He said the feds cannot come out to investigate without being invited, and it turned into a defensive posture by Governor Pritzker. He said the Governor put an inspector general in charge of the investigation but that takes 4-6 months to get answers. As for those still in the home, he said they need to follow protocols, and if there's another outbreak, they must follow lockdown procedure and they should have a plan in place to bring in federal help right away. He also said whatever they've learned from this should be put into place at all other Illinois veteran's homes.

At Issue

December 20, 2020

Guests: Kiran Joshi, Senior Medical Officer Cook County Dept. of Public Health
Sharon Welbel, Chair of Infection Control Cook County Hospital System
30 minutes out of 30-minute program

This program centered on plans in Cook County for distributing the new Coronavirus vaccine. Welbel said they were surprised to learn the state's second and third shipments would be about half of what was originally expected. But she said the key is making sure the same folks who receive their first dosage also take the second about 21 days later (the Pfizer version). Joshi said the county's response to dealing with ultra-cold storage needs and other specifics with receiving and distributing the vaccine will be a team effort. There are 2.5 million people in their jurisdiction. He said anyone inoculated with vaccine that is stored outside the window of temperatures may not be fully protected. He also said the new Moderna version does not require the same ultra-cold storage and transportation. Welbel talked about the vaccine being safe despite the speed of creation. She said no corners were cut. She also said research has been ongoing for more than 10 years on the RNA action of delivering such a vaccine. She said while there have been a few allergic reactions, she said the ingredients really don't include much in the way of preservatives, the usual culprit. They're not sure the reason. But they require people to stay for 15 minutes after the shot for observation, and they'll be tracking for any reactions. For the rollout of who gets the vaccine when, Welbel said Cook County is sticking to Chicago Department of Public Health guidelines, looking at those with the highest risk and healthcare workers first. She said there are hundreds of thousands of healthcare workers, then it'll be those at long term care facilities. Joshi said they have a partnership with two major pharmacy chains which will visit more than 200 long term care facilities. He said to be sure there are enough to vaccinate all of Illinois, the state has expanded the scope of practice to even include dentists. Asked about concerns by many African Americans due to the country's history of medical experimentation, Joshi said they need consistent messaging. He said when he counsels patients on any preventative measure, he walks through all the risks with them. He said this vaccine has very few risks. And he said the benefit is to protect yourself and your loved ones. Welbel said people need to have patience, that this likely will go through next summer. She said as more people get vaccinated, they'll have more data to work with. At this point, Joshi said they're in discussions about when everyone knows things are working, how to time a rollback to mitigation currently in place. He said they'll have to watch the indicators in the community along with positivity rates and strain on the health system.

VII. VOTER INFORMATION

At Issue

October 18, 2020

Guests: Tony Duncan, Businessman, Coalition to Stop the Tax Hike Amendment
Quentin Fulks, Executive Director Vote Yes for Fairness

30 minutes out of 30 minute program

This program discussed the pros and cons of the Illinois income tax referendum, with citizens voting whether to change the constitution to allow a switch from Illinois' current flat income tax rate, to a graduated income tax. Fulks said it is not fair for someone making \$1 billion a year to pay the same rate as someone making \$40,000. He said the proposal would mean higher taxes on the wealthy and given 97 percent of Illinois residents a tax cut. Duncan said the issue is not about fair, but about power. He said this is about giving Springfield the power to raise taxes whenever they want. Fulks said people should be segmented into their ability to pay. He said the power to tax will be the same, but top earners should pay more. Fulks said they have studies showing Black and Hispanic families paid \$4 billion more over the last 20 years than they would under the "fair tax." He said 4.95 percent doesn't mean the same to someone making \$1 billion as it does to someone making \$40,000. Fulks said the state has a revenue problem not a spending problem. He said the state only funds education at 25 percent, putting the burden on property taxes. He said property taxes could be lowered if the state raises more money. Then other money would go toward paying down pension obligations, staying away from borrowing money and paying high interest rates. Duncan said the state's big issue is spending, and there are ways to fix the budget without raising taxes. He said Illinois already is the second highest taxed state. He predicts the graduated tax won't do anything as planned in the near or longterm, and we're seeing states move away from the graduated tax rate. He cited Connecticut, Tennessee, and North Carolina as states not seeing the progress they expected. Fulks said there is no correlation between businesses leaving a state and graduated taxes. He said what is happening is migration to other states due to lack of economic opportunity. He said many people leave because of a lack of jobs, high burden property taxes and thus can't build wealth. He said the state needs to invest more in those communities and let those more in need pay less in taxes. Duncan disagreed saying he owns a small business and he sees people and employers feeling the state because of feeling overwhelmed by taxes. He said if politicians were serious about the rates planned, they would have baked them into the amendment. He said they can change the rates the day after the election. Host Craig Dellimore then brought up the current retirement system has become a major issue. Fulks said it is not, because retirement income is exempt in Illinois. Basically Duncan said what we're voting on is giving politicians to raise taxes anytime they want.

At Issue

October 25, 2020

Guest: Risa Lanier, Chair Judicial Evaluation Committee of CBA

30 minutes out of 30 minute program

Lanier chairs the evaluation committee for the Chicago Bar Association. This program centered on all the judges on the ballot, which can be confusing for most voters. She said once a judge is elected to their position, every six years or so they appear on the ballot for retention. The Chicago Bar association rates all the candidates. She said there is a rigorous process featuring an in-depth evaluation and investigation for all those either running for the first time, or up for retention. They do questionnaires and interviews with those who've appeared before the judges, those who've supervised them, checking qualifications, any disciplinary action, etc. Lanier said most people don't know where to look for the information, and that's why bar associations need to lead the public in a direction where to get that info. She said their website has information on every judge on the ballot. She said judges touch every part of society, so voting for them is just as important as any office. As for judges who periodically make headlines, she said people should understand they're looking at a snapshot of a judge's career, and people should view news stories with perspective. Asked whether judges should be in politics, Lanier said judicial independence is the cornerstone of our democracy. She said you must be careful when you think about judges being backed by any particular organization. She said it is important to ensure candidates they recommend are free from any type of bias. She also said the current system of election of some judges and judges appointing associate judges has helped with diversity. While judges make decisions based on the law, Lanier said it was important for judges to understand the root causes for some of the crime that happens in communities. She said when you talk about equitable application of the law, you have to take into consideration, when making decisions about someone's freedom and life, what pushed someone into making the decision they did. She said if you understand the community they came from, that makes for better application of the law.

At Issue

November 1, 2020

Guest: Lauren Staley Ferry, Will County Clerk

15 minutes out of 30-minute program

This portion of the program talked about the upcoming Presidential election just days away. Staley Ferry said Will County has had record early voting turnout. She said they had all the Covid related supplies necessary and suggested people bring their own pen. She said the wait time at some locations has been as much as two hours. She said for those who had not yet sent their mail-in ballots, they should fill them out and drop boxes will be available until Monday night, but not on Election Day. She said all mailed-in ballots are tracked on their web site, so people can follow along when it was sent and when it was received. She said security and integrity are fine, that the system only allows people to vote one time, either in person or by mail. She said the volume was dramatic compared to four years ago, when 36,000 ballots were mailed out. This year it was more than 125,000. She said those already received have been put through tabulators but nothing is announced until 7pm Tuesday.

At Issue

November 8, 2020

Guest: Stephanie Kifowit, IL Democrat State Representative Aurora

30 minutes out of 30-minute program

Kifowit said she plans to run for Illinois' Speaker of the House, a role held for years by Mike Madigan. But Madigan, while not charged, has been implicated in the ComEd bribery scandal. Kifowit said Madigan is innocent until proven guilty, but we need leaders who follow the spirit of the law and have public trust. She said the implications about Madigan question his integrity. She said it is the dual role of Madigan being Speaker and chair of the state Democratic Party that she's challenging. Kifowit admitted she has had funding support from Madigan in the past, but said that shouldn't stop someone from standing up when they see something wrong. She blamed some election losses to Republicans in the state, including legislative seats, supreme court and graduated income tax amendment losses, to being saddled with the reputation of Madigan. She said quite a few Democrats are saying it is time for him to step down. She said if the public agrees they want new leadership, they should call their state representatives and let them know. Asked if her public stance against Madigan could impact her own future, Kifowit said she recognizes there is a potential to lose the battle but still win the war. She said this is a battle we need to wage for the people of Illinois. Asked about whether the vote may split among Democrats, giving Republicans a chance to elect a Speaker of their choice, she said that won't happen. Separately, with the graduated income tax proposal voted down, she said they'll be looking at budget cuts in the legislature. But she said about 90 percent of the budget is required to be paid, so it'll come from the other 10 percent, which includes education, DCF, and state police. She said they need to deal with the pension problem as well.

At Issue

December 6, 2020

Guest: Adam Kinzinger, Republican Congressman, Illinois' 16th District
20 minutes out of 30-minute program

Kinzinger talked about rhetoric over the election, saying you will find instances of voter fraud in elections, but in states won by overwhelming margins, it is difficult to find that much such fraud. He said President Trump's declaration of massive fraud could be dangerous. He said if a news agency checks facts and find fraud not to be true, people then think they support the other candidate. Asked what the protracted fight over the election is doing to the Republican Party, Kinzinger said that remains to be seen after January, but he said they haven't had a good spokesperson for conservatism since Ronald Reagan. About a change at the top, Kinzinger said Joe Biden is an honorable man, but his concerns are based on policy. He said he is concerned with the Iran situation and China, and he wants to know what the recovery will look like. He said Congress needs to make sure the economy remains at least on idel, and they need to save as many restaurants as possible. He expects big disparities between the haves and have nots. He said stimulus is important, but said they were working in a bipartisan way until Nancy Pelosi brought up a Democratic only stimulus bill without talking to Republicans. He said that had nothing to do with Covid-19. He said the Federal Government should help with anything impacted by Coronavirus, but not with prior local government mismanagement. He said Illinois' problem is that 70 percent of expenditures are on pensions. He said the state has tough decisions, and the Federal Government will not bail them out. He also said the Senate used to be for grown-ups, but now it is the place people go when they want to become famous and eventually become President. He said that has people saying crazy things. Kinzinger also blames the media in part for the way one side looks at the other as the enemy. He said with the major TV outlets obsessed with Donald Trump, nobody knew that China and India almost went to war with each other. He said he would prefer the US join the Trans Pacific Partnership, which is a big free trade zone around China. He called the Chinese President racist, that he thinks Chinese people are racially, morally, and ethnically superior to any other race on earth. He said they monitoring what people are doing. Kinzinger also talked about how Covid-19 has led to more than 20 deaths at the LaSalle Veterans Home. He called that tragic, and they need to learn why this happened, mentioning they discovered hand sanitizer without alcohol in it, plus a number of staff attended a Halloween party. He said the investigation is continuing, but the US Veteran's Affairs office said they would offer help by sending an infectious disease specialist to the home because the Illinois specialist was out sick with Covid, that they're aware the Illinois specialist wasn't in place until the end of November. He said the feds cannot come out to investigate without being invited, and it turned into a defensive posture by Governor Pritzker. He said the Governor put an inspector general in charge of the investigation but that takes 4-6 months to get answers. As for those still in the home, he said they need to follow protocols, and if there's another outbreak, they must follow lockdown procedure and they should have a plan in place to bring in federal help right away. He also said whatever they've learned from this should be put into place at all other Illinois veteran's homes.

VIII. SCHOOL REFORM AND EDUCATION

At Issue

December 27, 2020

Guest: Cardinal Blasé Cupich, Archbishop of Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago

6 minutes out of 30-minute program

Cupich talked about the year 2020 as it related to the Catholic Church. He said on March 13, due to Covid-19, they closed all parishes and schools ahead of the state order and set up a task force to determine how to move forward. In all, more than 200 schools and 300 churches in Lake and Cook Counties were closed. With people wanting to embrace faith at times of crisis, Cupich said they shifted to online ministry and used science and data to decide on any reopening. But he said even now with some parishes open, people for the most part are afraid to return to church even with safety measures in place. He said food pantries have indicated the number of people coming for food has grown five-fold. He said the archdiocese has collected about \$20 million for relief efforts, plus another \$15 million for things like burial costs, domestic violence and tuition assistance. Many schools reopened in September, and he said about 85 percent of the students are in-person, while the rest are in virtual classes. He said after the holidays, they're delaying any return until January 18 to allow for quarantining after potential holiday gatherings.