

Office of the Speaker of the House

The Speaker of the House of Representatives derives responsibility and influence over legislative activities through statutes, constitutional mandates and House rules of procedure. Chosen by members of the House, the Speaker invites participation from a wide range of philosophies from members of both parties in determining a legislative agenda.

As the presiding officer of the House, the Speaker determines when the House will meet and what type of business it will conduct. As manager of debate on bills, resolutions and amendments, the Speaker is responsible for recognizing members, formally calling votes, deciding parliamentary issues and maintaining decorum in the House chambers.

The comprehensive duties of the office include managing all House offices, facilities, professional and clerical staff, custodians and security personnel. Administratively, the Speaker signs and authenticates all acts, proceedings, orders, writs, warrants and subpoenas issued by the House.

In organizing a team to help ensure smooth operation of House proceedings, the Speaker selects the Majority Leader, Deputy Majority Leaders and Assistant Majority Leaders. The House Majority Leader serves as party spokesperson and assists with the flow of legislation. The Speaker may appoint chairs and majority members of standing committees, which are the public forums of proposed legislation.

Traditionally, the Office of the Speaker of the House has a profound bearing on the effectiveness of Illinois government and citizen representation in the state.



Michael J. Madigan
Speaker of the House

Michael J. Madigan (Democrat) was re-elected Speaker of the House in January 2017, a position he has held for all but two years since 1983. In August 2017, Madigan will become the longest serving State House Speaker in the history of the U.S. He has also served as House Democratic Leader and House Majority Leader.

As Speaker, Madigan has worked to build consensus, improve the quality of life for residents across all regions of Illinois and address Illinois' most pressing issues in a cooperative and bipartisan manner. He advocates for honest, efficient government and has fought to strengthen the financial security of middle-class families. Under his leadership, the Legislature has enacted sweeping ethics laws, the first campaign finance limits in state history, and needed reforms to the state budget process and workers' compensation system.

Madigan is focused on addressing the state's budget deficit and protecting critical services for the elderly, disabled and struggling families, and other vulnerable residents.

Madigan is also leading House Democratic efforts to enact reforms that grow the economy while strengthening the middle class. Madigan refuses to believe the only way to create jobs is to cut wages and strip away workplace protections. Instead, he is leading an effort to pass reforms that level the playing field for small- and medium-sized employers, invest in businesses that invest in Illinois, and help families keep more of what they earn by expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit and raising the minimum wage.

Madigan is working to increase state assistance for elementary and high schools and invest in Illinois' public colleges and universities.

Speaker Madigan was first elected as a delegate to the 1970 Constitutional Convention and then as a state Representative the same year. He was born April 19, 1942, in the district

he now represents. He graduated from the University of Notre Dame and Loyola University Chicago School of Law and practices law in Chicago.

Madigan and his wife, Shirley, have three daughters, a son and four grandchildren.



Barbara Flynn Currie
Majority Leader

Barbara Flynn Currie (Democrat) is the first woman Majority Leader in the history of the General Assembly, a position she has held since 1997. As the second-ranking House official, she serves as party spokesperson and assists with the flow of legislation, working in a bipartisan manner to address the challenges facing Illinois.

Representative Currie joined the House in 1979. Her legislative accomplishments include sponsorship of the Illinois Freedom of Information Act and the Illinois Earned Income Tax Credit. She has fought to protect those who blow the whistle on corrupt public officials, toughen revolving door prohibitions on former state employees and prohibit sexual harassment in the workplace.

Currie has sponsored legislation to make it easier for Illinois residents to vote by allowing online voter registration, create an individual retirement savings account system for private sector workers, reform the state's juvenile justice system and expand the protections of the Equal Pay Act.

Currie graduated with honors from the University of Chicago, where she also earned a master's in political science. She serves on the board of directors of the American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois and is a member of the League of Women Voters, American Association of University Women and the Sierra Club.

Representative Currie has two children and four grandchildren. Her late husband, David P. Currie, was the Edward H. Levi Distinguished Service professor at the University of Chicago Law School.

Jim Durkin (Republican) was first elected House Minority Leader in August 2013. He served in the House from 1995 to 2002, when he became the Republican nominee for the U.S. Senate. He returned to the General Assembly in 2006 when he was elected to represent the 82nd District.

In 2008-09, Representative Durkin served as the ranking Republican on the House Special Investigative Impeachment Committee that recommended impeachment and removal from office for former Governor Blagojevich. During the 99th General Assembly, Durkin sponsored the Illinois firearm trafficking law to keep illegally acquired guns out of the hands of gang members. He also successfully negotiated property tax freeze legislation and legislation to combat Illinois' heroin crisis. Prior to being elected Republican Leader, Durkin served as an Assistant Republican Leader, was a member of the Illinois Task Force on Gang Violence, fought to protect children from sexual predators and is a founding member of the Illinois Legislative Diabetes Caucus.

Durkin received his bachelor's from Illinois State University and his law degree from The John Marshall Law School. He is a former assistant Cook County state's attorney and assistant attorney general, and currently a partner with the law firm of Arnstein and Lehr, LLP.

Representative Durkin and his wife live in Western Springs with their family.



Jim Durkin
Republican Leader