



Newsletter

Exciting Updates, Resources and More!

Fall is almost here and things are ramping up in the 25th District. Check out some recent highlights and learn about resources below!

Diaper Drive

Our office has been partnering with the Fox Valley United Way this month for a county wide Diaper Drive! Help us support local families in the Kane County area by donating diapers sizes 1-7, adult diapers, pull-ups and wipes at our Aurora District Office located at 1177 N. Highland Ave., Suite 101. We are accepting donations from now until Sept. 30. For additional drop off locations, visit Fox Valley United Way's [website](#). Be sure to share with family and friends!



Know Your Rights with Good Morning Aurora

This week, I had the honor to join the Illinois ACLU and State Representative Barbara Hernandez on Good Morning Aurora to talk about voting rights for individuals who were formerly incarcerated or have a criminal record. It is important for individuals to know their rights and exercise their right to vote. I encourage anyone to connect with the [Illinois ACLU](#) or my office to learn more information on your voting rights. View the Good Morning Aurora episode [here](#).



Colibri Fellowship Program

Last week, I was invited by the Colibri Fellowship Program, hosted by the [Resurrection Project](#), to speak to this year's cohort of individuals who are seeking DOJ accreditation to provide support to immigrants navigating the immigration system. This program seeks to expand



non-attorney legal aid in areas outside of metro Chicago and is available to non-profit workers from Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin.

Hispanic Heritage Month Celebrations

Happy Hispanic Heritage Month! I look forward to this month each year as I get to see our community take pride in their heritage and express themselves by honoring their roots. As a proud Latina, I am honored to represent the Latino community across the 25th District.



Last week, I celebrated the start of Hispanic Heritage Month at Fiestas Patrias in Aurora. I also had the opportunity to attend the Roots Aurora: Celebrating our Cultures event with [Family Focus](#) and West Aurora School District 129, and saw a showcase of the different cultures in our community. Thank you to everyone who stopped by to say hi!



Legislative Updates

IARF Champion Award

This past spring, I led an initiative to increase wages for direct support professionals who work closely with individuals living with disabilities, providing high quality care and helping individuals thrive and lead fulfilling lives. A few weeks ago, the Illinois Association of Rehabilitation Facilities honored me with the 2024 IARF Champion Award. I am extremely grateful to receive this recognition from IARF and for their continued advocacy for increasing wages for DSPs who support individuals living with disabilities in our communities. I am committed to continuing this fight to ensure that DSPs receive dignified pay that reflects the importance of their work. Read more about our legislative efforts in the spring [here](#).



State and Local Resources

Girls Lead Mentorship Program

The Girls Lead Mentorship Program, organized by the office of Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton, is accepting applications for both mentors and mentees! This initiative connects girls from fifth grade to high school with women leaders across Illinois, offering hands-on experience in public service. The deadline to apply is Oct. 20! Learn more about the program and apply [here](#).



OSFM Small Equipment Grant Program

We are less than two weeks away from the deadline for eligible fire departments and ambulance services to submit their applications to the Office of the State Fire Marshal for their Small Equipment Grant Program. The program provides grants up to \$26,000 for purchasing small firefighting and ambulance equipment. Applications should be submitted electronically or postmarked by Oct. 1. Review the eligibility requirements [here](#). View the application [here](#).

State Flag Redesign Contest

Illinois is exploring getting a new state flag! The Illinois Flag Commission is accepting public submissions for a new state flag from now until Oct. 18. You can now submit your design ideas for an opportunity to contribute to Illinois' history. Submit your design ideas online [here](#)!



Our office runs four advisory committees: Environmental and Agriculture, Mental Health, Seniors, and Education. These committees are a limited public forum led by volunteer chairs and seek to create compassionate conversation among the voices of the 25th in order to provide effective representation. To join these committees you can email the following for more information and meeting information:

- Environment / 1st Wednesday at 7pm / environment.25th@gmail.com
- Mental Health / 3rd Tuesday at 6pm / mentalhealth.25th@gmail.com
- Seniors / 2nd Thursday at 10am / seniors.25th@gmail.com
- Education / 2nd Thursday at 7pm / education.25th@gmail.com

My staff and I look forward to hearing from you. I encourage you to reach out to us at 630-326-9319 (English), 630-326-9419 (Spanish) or (331)465-9690 constituentservices@senatorvilla.com.

Stay in Touch! Follow us on Social Media: [Facebook: @StateSenatorKVilla](#), [Instagram: @SenatorKarinaVilla](#).

Be well!

Karina Villa, MSW
State Senator, 25th District