



Managing M^cCormick Place Complex and Navy Pier



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HISTORIC LEGISLATION TO CUT COSTS AND KEEP McCORMICK PLACE COMPETITIVE BECOMES LAW

New law will create jobs and bolster local economy

CHICAGO – Officials of the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority (MPEA) and the Chicago Convention and Tourism Bureau (CCTB) today applauded the passage of a new law meant to reform labor rules, establish exhibitor rights and realign McCormick Place operations with its major competitors in the convention and trade show industry.

The legislation recently gained overwhelming approval by the Illinois General Assembly, with leadership and support provided by Governor Pat Quinn, Mayor Richard M. Daley, House Speaker Michael J. Madigan, Senate President John Cullerton, Senate Minority Leader Christine Radogno and House Minority Leader Tom Cross, as well as the MPEA Interim Board and CCTB. The new law establishes an 18-month period to develop and implement significant reforms that will result in lower costs for exhibitors. The MPEA and CCTB remain committed to communicating these reforms to customers, as the new procedures are finalized.

“This is a victory for our customers, our economy and the working people of Illinois,” said John Gates, Chairman of the Interim MPEA Board that pushed for swift legislative action. “This was always about protecting jobs and preserving an industry that provides \$8 billion in economic impact for our State. Lawmakers have taken decisive action to keep McCormick Place, and Navy Pier, the preeminent facilities in the convention and tourism industries.”

“We said from the beginning that reform at McCormick Place would require the commitment of all stakeholders,” said Juan Ochoa, outgoing MPEA CEO. “This is a historic moment, and we all should be proud of what we achieved together. The focus has always been to protect the hundreds of thousands of jobs of hard-working men and women who are supported by the convention industry.”

Tim Roby, CCTB President and CEO believes this legislation will renew Chicago’s status as a premier convention and trade show destination, while helping to drive business to hotels, restaurants, retail and more.

“For many months now, we have been working diligently with our customers, Governor Quinn, Mayor Daley and the legislative leaders to bring comprehensive change to Chicago’s meetings and convention industry,” said Tim Roby, CCTB President and CEO. “We have been aggressive in communicating to our customers the extraordinary benefits of the legislation and we will continue working with them throughout the next 18 months to ensure that they understand the positive changes at every step along the way. This is a very exciting time for everyone involved.”

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The new law calls for:

- New labor work rules that reduce crew sizes, require less overtime pay and eliminate hassles for customers.
- Expanding exhibitor rights, allowing customers to do their own work, regardless of booth size.
- The appointment of a Trustee, former MPEA CEO Jim Reilly, to oversee operations during an 18 month transition period and select a private manager for McCormick Place.
- Restructuring capital debt to allow the MPEA to further lower costs to customers and put the MPEA on sound financial footing.
- Allowing shows to select outside electrical and food service contractors.
- Auditing contracts to ensure savings are passed on to customers.
- Make recommendations to whether Navy Pier should remain in control by the Authority or become an independent entity.

“We listened to our customers and pushed for reforms that address their concerns. This new law introduces sweeping reforms that will transform Chicago’s meetings and convention industry,” said David Causton, General Manager of McCormick Place. “We now have very competitive market offerings that put our customers first across the board. It’s a new day in Chicago’s convention industry.”

Chicago customers are pleased with the outcome.

“This is a victory, not only for Chicago and the State of Illinois, but also for the 2,000 exhibitors who participate annually at the *International Home + Housewares Show*,” said Mia Rampersad, Vice President, Tradeshow for the International Housewares Association. “The IHA has hosted our annual event in Chicago for more than 70 years and believes it is the best convention destination in the world. This law will make McCormick Place a more cost-effective trade show venue and IHA’s preferred destination for years to come.”

The new law also provides additional public funding to assist the CCTB in marketing Chicago as a convention destination. The CCTB has served as the sales and marketing arm for the city for more than 30 years.

“Customers, businesses and Illinois taxpayers will benefit enormously from additional funding to the CCTB,” said Mike Cassidy, CCTB Chairman. “It will give us more resources to maintain and attract new business to Chicago and Illinois.”

Meetings and conventions held at McCormick Place support 66,000 jobs and generate \$251 million in tax revenue each year. Convention goers who come to Illinois spend close to \$8 billion in the state. These big benefits were a focal point throughout the months of discussion that led to the new reforms.

Continuous updates will be available for Chicago customers on the Chicago Meeting Matters website at <http://meetinChicago.typepad.com/chicagomeetingmatters/>.

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