ICBV Office Update

June 2, 2017

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**\*\*1** **July 10-15, 2017**

**NFB National Convention** in Orlando Florida, and will be at the Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel. For more information about the national convention, and to pre-register, go to [www.nfb.org](http://www.nfb.org) . Please remember that hotel registration and convention pre-registration are two separate items. But to get the special hotel rate for national convention, you must register for convention.

**July 17-28 2017**

The National Federation of the Blind is excited to offer its **Braille Enrichment for Literacy and Learning Program,** BELL, this summer in Illinois. This is a great opportunity for Braille skills to be addressed in a fun and new environment.

Where: The Chicago Lighthouse 1850 W. Roosevelt Rd. Chicago, Il 60608

When: Monday- Friday, July 17-28 2017

Times: 8:30-3:30

Cost: $50

For more information please visit: <https://nfb.org/BELL-academy>

**July 31- August 4, 2017**

The National Federation of the Blind is excited to offer its **Braille Enrichment for Literacy and Learning Program**, BELL, this summer in Illinois. This opportunity will be a weeklong residential program on Illinois State University’s campus.

Where: Springfield, IL

Who: Blind child/Parent pairs

Cost: $50

For more information please visit: <https://nfb.org/BELL-academy>

SAVE THE DATE:

**September 12-15, 2017**

**NABM BLAST 2017**

Nashville Airport Marriott Hotel

Tradeshow September 13th

Mark Your Calendars Now!!!!

Visit [www.blindmerchants.org](http://www.blindmerchants.org) for more information as it becomes available. For more information, contact Nicky Gacos at nickycolorado@netscape.net or call him at (908) 464-5359 or contact Terry Smith at terrysmith@epbfi.com or 865-599-7148.

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**\*\*2** **Cullen & Associates May 23, 2017**

SJR 42 (Hutchinson), which sets the estimated general funds level for 2018 at $37.51 billion, was approved by the Senate this afternoon by a vote of 33-23-0. The joint resolution will now move to the House.

The Senate also approved SB 9 (Hutchinson), the revenue budget implementation bill, by a vote of 32-6-0. The legislation is expected to raise $5.4 billion in new revenues, some of the highlights of which include:

Increases the individual income tax rate to 4.95% (from 3.25%) and the corporate rate to 7% (from 5.25%), retroactive to January 1, 2017.

Creates income limit caps for standard deductions at $500,000 for joint filers and $250,000 for single.

Reinstates the Research and Development tax credit, graphics arts exemption, and makes the Manufacturers’ Purchase credit permanent.

Increases the sales tax base on some services, such as storage, laundry, exterminations, security services, tattoos and piercings, cable, satellite, and digital streaming services.

Increases the earned income tax credit from 10% to 15%.

Extends the film production services credit and live theater tax credit.

Suspends the non-combination rule and adds back certain federal deductions, making them taxable by eliminating the domestic production deduction

Taxes off-shore (outer continental shelf) entities

Increases the cap on the education expense credit from $500 per family to $750.

Lowers LLC fees.

An FY17 supplemental and an FY18 budget was approved by the Senate by a vote of 33-23-2­­­­­. SB 6 (Steans) appropriates $77.4 billion All Funds ($37.3 billion GRF, $35.2 billion OSF, $8.5 billion Federal Funds). Some of the highlights include:

Keeps Medicaid liability flat (no cuts)

Holds LGDF Harmless

Includes CPS pension payment

Includes additional funds for early childhood education

Fully funds MAP

Adds $286 million to the school funding formulary for K-12

Assumes $3 billion in savings from pension reforms and employee group health changes (Assumes $435 million savings from AFCSME contract with Governor’s “Best & Final offer” being accepted)

Cuts 5% from state operations and program lines

Shifts $100 million in transportation debt service from GRF to the Road Fund

Includes a 5% reserve in other state funds

Both Chambers will reconvene Wednesday, as budget deliberations continue, and the House is expected to consider its own budget plan by week’s end.

**Session Update – May 31st, 2017**

The Illinois General Assembly has adjourned the regularly-scheduled spring session and will now convene in overtime session. For the third year in a row, the continued political discord between the first-term, Republican Governor and the Democrat-controlled Legislature has derailed the approval of a comprehensive, state budget.

While many were hopeful during the spring months that a bipartisan, Senate Grand Bargain budget and reform package would prevail, Senate Democrats passed their own budget last week, which was not well received in its entirety by the House. In addition, without the inclusion of what the Governor believed was “real property tax relief,” he pledged to veto the package. Negotiations were unsuccessful, and a House Democrat-only proposal was not unveiled in the final days of May due to the lack of votes needed for approval.

Both Chambers will now remain in “continuous session.” The House adjourned until the call of the Speaker, and the Senate adjourned until the call of the President. Legislators will not receive per diem for regular session days after May 31st. Should the Governor call a Special Session, per diems will apply. The passage of legislation with an immediate effective date prior to end of the calendar year will require a 3/5ths super-majority in both Chambers. The new fiscal year, FY18, begins July 1st.

Speaker Madigan pledged that House Democrats remain ready to work with the Republican Governor and find common ground whenever he is ready to return to the table and work in “good faith.” Madigan further criticized the Governor's "reckless strategy of holding the budget hostage to create leverage for his corporate agenda." The House will host hearings to "prepare a budget for the coming fiscal year,” and the first hearing will be June 8th in Chicago.

Governor Rauner accused the Democrat majorities in the General Assembly of a “complete dereliction of duty” for not approving an FY18 budget. With the Republican legislative leaders by his side, he called it a “tragic failure.” State Comptroller Mendoza said in a statement that she was disappointed that the Governor did not work to compromise with legislators to pass a budget. The Comptroller further stated that, “the consequences for Illinois and its residents will be dire” if a budget is not approved by the start of the fiscal year July 1.

The path forward, again, remains unclear. The General Assembly will reconvene in June with the hope of approving an FY17 supplemental and FY18 budget prior to July 1st. As an alternative, the General Assembly could choose to approve another “temporary” or “stop gap” measure to sustain the State until agreement can be reached on a full budget. It’s also possible that only funding for K-12 education will be appropriated. Moody’s continues to warn that Illinois’ bill backlog “threatens the financial foundation of the State.” In the meantime, the effects of the impasse are widespread as the social service safety net is collapsing, Illinois’ higher education system is facing potential disaster, and if a budget is not enacted, schools are at risk of not opening in August. At this point, on the brink of financial failure, a bipartisan solution will be necessary to solve Illinois’ budget crisis in its entirety, if there is the will to do so.

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**\*\*3 IAMC Legislative Report**

Legislative Report on the 100th General Assembly 2017 Spring Session May 31, 2017 Prepared by BP Consultants for IAMC

Both chambers were in session this past week and adjourned on May 31st to the call of the chair. The regular Spring Session ended with both Democrats and Republicans blaming each other for the failure to reach agreement on a permanent, balanced budget and the taxes to support it. The focus this week has been on the House which has the three Senate bills that make-up the budget package approved by the Senate last week. On Wednesday the House Democrats emerged from a four-hour caucus and said no votes would be taken on a spending and tax plan ahead of a midnight deadline to approve legislation with a simple majority vote. Representative Gregory Harris said many Democrats were concerned about what happened earlier in the Senate where Senate Democrats thought they’d reached agreement with the Republicans on a wide variety of issues, including the budget and some reform measures sought by Rauner. “At the end of that agreement, they found the Governor was pulling votes off the bill and then attacking the very people who had worked on the compromise,” Harris said. The legislature did pass several bills that addressed some of the components of the Governor’s Turnaround Agenda, but many of those bills had only partisan support from the Democrats.

On Wednesday, Speaker Madigan issued a statement that, “There is no more urgent matter facing the state than the passage of a comprehensive, balanced budget, and House Democrats will continue our efforts to address this challenge, end this destructive impasse and close the Rauner budget deficit. The House Democratic Budget Working Group led by Representative Greg Harris will hold public hearings and continue working in June to prepare a budget for the coming fiscal year. The first hearing will be held on June 8 in Chicago.” The Senate Democrats issued a statement that, “Although forced to go it alone, the Illinois Senate Democrats, ultimately, produced every reform filed as part of the bipartisan grand bargain. We took the challenge of reforms, cuts, and revenue to create stability and certainty.” Before adjourning, Senate President Cullerton said that he's disappointed; warns of the "real pain" the state will see amid continued budget impasse. He said the Senate Democrats were the only ones that voted for and passed a budget. When asked about the next deadline, Cullerton said the Governor hasn’t even called a meeting.

In the afternoon, Governor Rauner, Senate Republican Leader Radogno and House Republican Leader Durkin held a joint press conference to discuss the end of session. Governor Rauner said, "Please (General Assembly and Leaders) stay to pass a truly balanced budget especially one with a property tax freeze." He said that not passing a balanced budget with reforms is a fundamental dereliction of duty on part of the majority party. Further, he said that it's part of his job to travel the state and communicate with Illinoisans, but that if the House holds hearings they'd be perpetuating a sham. Radogno said that she hopes to revisit, resurrect negotiations with Democrats that she says started successfully. Durkin said he is bitterly disappointed with the Democrats unwillingness to work together to pass a balanced budget.

Here is the status of components of the Senate’s “grand bargain” compromise package:

SB 1 (Senator Manar and Representative Davis) – School funding formula reforms, including Chicago pension funding. This bill has passed both chambers but has been held in the Senate on a procedural motion.

SB 2 (Senator Lightford) – Minimum wage increase. This bill remains on Third Reading in the Senate.

SB 3 (Senator Thomas Cullerton and Representative Yingling) – Local government consolidation. This bill passed both chambers and now goes to the Governor for review.

SB 4 (Senator Harmon and Representative Greg Harris) – Authorizes $7 billion borrowing to pay down the state’s bill backlog. This bill passed the Senate and remains on Second Reading in the House.

SB 5 (Senate President Cullerton) – Chicago Teachers Pension funding. This bill is on Third Reading in the Senate

SB 6 (Senator Steans and Representative Gregory Harris) – Appropriations for FY18 and supplemental spending for FY17. This bill passed the Senate and is on Second Reading in the House.

SB 7 (Senator Link and Representative Mayfield) – Gaming expansion. This bill passed the Senate and is in the House Rules Committee.

SB 8 (Senator Harmon and Representative Riley) – State procurement reforms. This bill has passed both chambers and now goes to the Governor for review.

SB 9 (Senator Hutchinson and Representative Davis) – Revenue enhancements for budget including income tax increases and expansion of sales tax to specified services. This bill has passed the Senate and is on Second Reading in the House.

(from 5/26) On Tuesday the Senate passed the budget components of the “grand bargain” compromise package without Republican support. SB 9 (Senator Hutchinson and Representative Ives) calls for about $5.4 billion in higher taxes, including raising the personal income tax rate from the current 3.75% to 4.95% and the corporate income tax rate from 5.25% to 7%. The tax plan ends a number of business tax breaks, but also imposes some means testing for some personal tax cuts. The bill also includes extending the sales tax to a number of services not now taxed, although the final list was reduced from previous versions of the bill (removed landscaping services and repair/maintenance of cars). Satellite TV services would be subject to a 5% franchise tax. The media has been reporting that following session on Friday, the House Democrats held a caucus and only have 42 votes for the tax bill – 60 votes are required for passage.

SB 12 (Senator Radogno) – Workers’ compensation reform. This bill is on Third Reading in the Senate.

SB 16 (Senate President Cullerton and Representative Durkin) – Pension reforms. This bill passed the Senate and is the House Rules Committee.

SB 41 (Senate President Cullerton and Representative Currie) – Local government debt consolidation. This bill has passed both chambers and now goes to the Governor for review.

SB 42 (Senator Manar and Representative Gregory Harris) – Budget implementation provisions. This bill passed the Senate and is on Second Reading in the House.

SB 478 (Senate President Cullerton) – Property tax freeze. This bill is on Third Reading in the Senate.

SB 484 (Senate President Cullerton and Representative Currie) – Two year property tax freeze, including school districts. This bill passed the Senate and is in the House Rules Committee.

The following is the status of other key legislation from this session:

HB 2525 (Representative Hoffman and Senator Raoul) – Workers’ compensation reform provisions. This bill passed both chambers and now goes to the Governor for review.

HB 2622 (Representative Fine and Senator Biss) – Creates a state workers comp insurance company. This bill passed both chambers and now goes to the Governor for review.

SB 81 (Senator Lightford and Representative Guzzardi) - Raises the minimum wage to $15 per hour by January 1, 2022. This bill passed both chambers and now goes to the Governor for review.

HB 109 (Representative Gregory Harris and Senate President Cullerton) – Stopgap spending bill that provides $800 million in partial funding to some human service programs and higher education for FY17. This bill passed the House and is on Third Reading in the Senate.

SB 1722 (Senator Raoul and Representative Durkin) – Lengthen sentencing for repeat gun offenders, advocated by Chicago Police Superintendent Eddie Johnson. This bill passed both chambers and now goes to the Governor for review.

SB 19 (Senator McCann and Representative Costello) - Stipulates that the Department of Corrections needs to maintain staffing levels for nurses and medical technicians that were in effect in January 2016. This bill has passed both chambers and has been sent to the Governor for review.

SB 14 (Senator John Cullerton and Representative Currie) – Provisions aimed at preventing retirement systems for Chicago municipal workers and laborers from going broke in about a decade. This bill has passed both chambers but has been held in the House on a procedural motion.

SB 1933 (Senator Manar and Representative Gabel) - Automatic voter registration provisions. This bill has passed both chambers and now goes to the Governor for review.

SB 886 (Senate President Cullerton and Representative Riley) – Authorizes the sale of the James R. Thompson Center in Chicago. This bill has passed both chambers and now goes to the Governor for review.

SB 31 (Senate President Cullerton and Representative Welch) – Creates the TRUST Act to prevent local police from holding people for immigration purposes without court-issued warrants. This bill passed both houses and now goes to the Governor for review.

HB 2771 (Representative Christian Mitchell and Senator Hutchinson) – Creates the Healthy Workplace Act which requires employers to provide specified paid sick days to employees. This bill has passed the Senate and is back in the House on Concurrence.

HB 479 (Representative Butler and Senator Raoul) – Legalizes fantasy sports, including taxation and oversight by the Illinois Gaming Board, as well as legalize internet gaming, but only for websites operated by companies that own Illinois casinos. The bill was amended in the Senate to add these provisions. This bill passed the Senate on Third Reading and is in the House on Concurrence.

SB 1839 (Senator Cunningham and Representative Phelps) – Telecommunications modernization and extension of the 9-1-1 system funding. This bill has passed both chambers and now goes to the Governor for review.

Thank you,

Desi Harris

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Scott Goodwin, IAMC President

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**\*\*4** Shared by Donnie Anderson, ICBV Chairman

**BIG PENSIONS JUST TINY PART OF BIG PENSION MESS**

By: Jared Rutecki; Better Government Association

WHY IT MATTERS: BGA analysis of new data underscores how chronically bad government policy, not fat pensions, lie at the heart of soaring pension debt now hobbling the state’s and Chicago’s efforts to pay for schools and other critical services.

Illinois’ budget mess is the stepchild of Illinois’ pension mess, and for that perhaps nothing incites more steam-coming-out-of-the-ears fury from critics than the volume of six figure annual retirement payouts—topped by one at $581,000—pledged to former public workers.

Yet a BGA analysis of 2017 data from major pension funds for state and municipal employees vividly illustrates the disconnect between high-rolling pensions, legally protected but irksome as they may be, and the deep financial plight experienced by many of those funds.

Simply put, the state’s 17 major pension funds are slated to pay out more than $17.3 billion in benefits to some 483,000 retirees and survivors this year, totals that underscore the broad reach of pension checks for former public employees. Those payments do not come direct from tax money, though there is an indirect correlation that can render the public confused and budget makers dyspeptic.

Just four percent of all beneficiaries this year are in line for pension paydays exceeding $100,000, with the biggest checks largely going to once high-paid former school administrators as well as doctors and dentists at public teaching hospitals. Payments for the overwhelming majority of pensioners, most of whom don’t qualify for Social Security, are far more modest.

The median pension in 2017 for retired suburban and Downstate teachers stands at $52,016, the analysis shows, while the median for general state workers is $28,946. For university workers, the median pension stands at $26,101, while for non-public safety municipal workers outside of Chicago it is $9,064.

The median represents the midpoint of all individual pensions paid out by a retirement system. It is different from an average, which can be skewed by those outsized, six-figure payouts.

The Illinois Constitution includes a strong prohibition against pension benefits, once granted, ever being “diminished or impaired.” But if the size of all pensions could magically be capped at $100,000, the savings at those major funds would amount to $450 million this year, only 2.6 percent of the total.

Read the full story here:

<http://www.bettergov.org/news/big-pensions-just-tiny-part-of-big-pension-mess>

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**\*\*5** Shared by Randy Hauth, Oregon

**Bipartisan Bill Passes House to Revamp State’s Blind Vending Program**

Blind vendors and workers will get first priority for any food contracts on state and local government properties, hoping to boost employment for blind people, most of whom are left out of the workforce. By Chris Gray

The House unanimously cleared a bill from Rep. Alissa Keny-Guyer, D-Portland, on Wednesday that will revamp the state’s vending machine program to increase jobs and business opportunities for blind people and encourage healthier snacks.

President Franklin Roosevelt signed a law giving blind people first priority to operate vending machines in federal buildings as part of the New Deal in 1936. The U.S. Census has reported that only 42 percent of blind Oregonians are employed, and the vending machine program has been a key way for them to find gainful employment.

But Oregon’s program only gives blind vendors preference, not priority, and it has only 14 blind vendors, compared to 115 in Tennessee, which gives first priority to blind vendors for any food and vending contracts on public property.

HB 3253 would give this first priority to blind business owners and require vending machine operators to pay fees to the Commission for the Blind. The bill now goes to the Senate.

“The change from preference to priority is the biggest thing to ever happen for this program,” said Eric Morris, director of the Business Enterprise Program for the Commission of the Blind.

Read the full story here:

<https://www.thelundreport.org/content/bipartisan-bill-passes-house-revamp-state%E2%80%99s-blind-vending-program>

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**\*\*6** From Vending Market Watch

**Minnesota Governor Signs Bill Providing Tax Parity For Vending Operators**

JUN 1, 2017 SOURCE: NAMA

(Chicago) May 31, 2017 – Tuesday night, Minnesota Governor Mark Dayton signed a budget bill that included tax parity for vending operators in the state. Members of the Minnesota Automatic Merchandising Council (MAMC) and NAMA have worked diligently over the last two years on this legislation.

The new law remedies an inequity in Minnesota tax law regarding the taxation of items sold through vending machines. It extends the existing tax exemption on the sale of food products to vending operators and makes it applicable to all retail locations in an equitable manner. Food products that are exempt from taxation when sold in grocery stores, convenience stores and catering trucks will now be exempt when sold through vending machines.

Read the full story here:

<http://www.vendingmarketwatch.com/news/12340005/minnesota-governor-signs-bill-providing-tax-parity-for-vending-operators?utm_source=VMW+Today&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=AUTM170526002&rdx.ident%5Bpull%5D=omeda%7C0441H3984723J8E>

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**\*\*7** From Vending Market Watch

**Philadelphia Soda Tax Revenue Drops In April** JUN 1, 2017

Revenue generated by the Philadelphia Beverage Tax fell 7 percent in April, reports the Philly Voice. The city brought in $6.5 million in April, a drop from the $7 million brought in during March. Philadelphia projects the tax will bring in $46 million by the end of the fiscal year on June 30, which would require generating more than $20 million total in May and June.

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**\*\*8** From Vending Times

**Congressmen Roskam And Woodall Visit A.H. Management And Flowers Foods** by Emily Jed Issue Date: Vol. 57, No. 6, June 2017, Posted On: 5/26/2017

ROLLING MEADOWS, IL and SUWANNEE, GA -- Rolling Meadows, IL's A.H. Management Group Inc. and Suwannee, GA-based baked goods giant Flowers Foods recently hosted U.S. Congressmen Peter Roskam (R-IL, 6th Dist.) and Rob Woodall (R-GA, 7th Dist.), respectively.

Roskam visited A.H. Management, a vending and foodservice operation, on May 15. Company executives informed the congressman of the topics important to the industry, ranging from tax matters to regulatory issues. A tour of the facility followed, during which Roaskam got a first-hand look at A.H. Management's day-to-day operations and was introduced to many of its employees.

Woodall visited Flowers Foods' Suwanee bakery on May 11 for a briefing on industry issues and a tour of the company's expansive production facility.

Both Congressmen reportedly were interested in discussing ideas and hearing suggestions on how government can help improve the landscape for businesses to continue to grow and support the economy. Roskam is a member of the House Ways and Means and Health Committees and Woodall is a member of the Rules, Transportation and Infrastructure and Budget Committees.

"Our visit with Rep. Roskam was a huge success," said A.H. Management vice-president of administration Linda Furlano. "He was engaging and very responsive to our concerns. We were able to inform him of the issues before us as an industry, as well as 'put a face' with those issues. We hope that he has an understanding of how our industry has been affected by current legislation and regulations, as well as the potential effects of pending ones."

See the full story:

<http://vendingtimes.com/ME2/dirmod.asp?sid=737C17AB0E09499F90660557C93983AD&nm=Articles&type=Publishing&mod=Publications::Article&mid=8F3A7027421841978F18BE895F87F791&tier=4&id=7072CA454FC2469196E28EC94D1C04C6>

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**\*\*9** From Vending Market Watch

**Martin Luther King County Labor Council Passes Resolution Against Beverage Tax** MAY 26, 2017 SOURCE: TEAMSTERS LOCAL 174

Resolution is an important step in fight against Seattle's proposed beverage tax

SEATTLE, May 22, 2017 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- On Wednesday May 17, 2017, Teamsters Local 174 presented a Resolution before the Martin Luther King County Labor Council urging them to "Beware of the Beverage Tax: It is not what it seems." The Resolution, which demanded that any beverage tax proposal include measures to address the negative impact on working families, was passed by the Council in a unanimous vote of the delegates.

In recent years, beverage taxes have become more and more attractive as potential revenue sources for cities and municipalities across the United States, including in the City of Seattle. However, these taxes have been shown time and time again to be destroyers of good jobs in the beverage industry and other related industries. Despite mounting evidence of this, beverage tax proponents have consistently failed to consider the adverse impacts these taxes have on the thousands of Union members who produce, warehouse, and deliver these products.

This Resolution demands that these adverse impacts be taken into account, and if they are not, then the Labor Council will be duty bound to oppose and defeat the proposal.

"We are pleased that the Martin Luther King County Labor Council has taken this important step in protecting working people in the City of Seattle," said Teamsters Joint Council 28 President Rick Hicks. "A beverage tax inSeattle would be devastating to workers in the beverage and related industries, and it is time the proponents of this tax started taking that seriously. This Resolution is a step in that direction."

The full text of the Resolution is below:

See the fully story here: <http://www.vendingmarketwatch.com/news/12338658/martin-luther-king-county-labor-council-passes-resolution-against-beverage-tax?utm_source=VMW+Today&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=AUTM170520002&rdx.ident%5Bpull%5D=omeda%7C0441H3984723J8E>

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**\*\*10** Shared by Second Sense

**Financial Assistance for Eye Care**

If you are in need of financial assistance to assess or treat an eye problem, many state and national resources regularly provide aid to people with vision problems.  The [National Eye Institute](http://orf.us9.list-manage2.com/track/click?u=d3c46de75944862c79f00fc26&id=72837832bb&e=a0a6338697) (NEI) provides a listing of several organizations you can contact for specific issues.  For eye exams and surgeries, contact [EyeCare America](http://orf.us9.list-manage1.com/track/click?u=d3c46de75944862c79f00fc26&id=9e219f0881&e=a0a6338697), [Vision USA](http://orf.us9.list-manage1.com/track/click?u=d3c46de75944862c79f00fc26&id=27a0d4bb07&e=a0a6338697), [Lions Club International](http://orf.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=d3c46de75944862c79f00fc26&id=495647e304&e=a0a6338697), and [Mission Cataract USA](http://orf.us9.list-manage2.com/track/click?u=d3c46de75944862c79f00fc26&id=f2bac4d11f&e=a0a6338697).  For prescription drug assistance, NEI recommends contacting [NeedyMeds](http://orf.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=d3c46de75944862c79f00fc26&id=f15c732bf0&e=a0a6338697), [Partnership for Prescription Assistance](http://orf.us9.list-manage1.com/track/click?u=d3c46de75944862c79f00fc26&id=b8eb5af2c9&e=a0a6338697), [Patient Access Network Foundation](http://orf.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=d3c46de75944862c79f00fc26&id=778bf5f17f&e=a0a6338697) and [RX Assist](http://orf.us9.list-manage1.com/track/click?u=d3c46de75944862c79f00fc26&id=d2094c8a86&e=a0a6338697).  You can find the entire list by visiting [www.nei.nih.gov](http://www.nei.nih.gov) and entering "financial assistance for eye care" in the search box.

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**\*\*11** Shared from the May 2017 edition of AppleVis Unlimited

**DeafBlind Individuals Now Have a Way to Use Text Relay on iOS With Braille** By Scott Davert May 16, 2017

On May 8, Sprint released a new update to the Sprint IP Relay app. While the description only states that there are "Miscellaneous bug fixes", one of those bug fixes is very significant... it restores access for braille users. Until now, braille users have not had a reliable solution to access relay via their mobile devices.

What is Text Relay Anyway?

For those unfamiliar, text relay allows a deaf or DeafBlind person to access the phone system through a relay operator, who is a hearing person that can relay the message from the deaf or DeafBlind user to a hearing person on the phone. The deaf or DeafBlind person can type messages from a mobile device or computer, which a hearing operator will then read to the caller. The Relay Operator will then type back to the deaf or DeafBlind person what the hearing person on the phone has said.

Many deaf individuals, who are native sign language users, utilize video phone systems to communicate with the hearing world via telephone through a relay operator. For more information on Video Phones, see this article <http://www.signinterpretingservices.com/common-questions.htm> . However, this is not possible for an individual who does not have enough residual vision to see the person signing to them. Until last week, no such service was available on a mobile platform that worked reliably for braille users with a text interface. This meant, for example, that a totally DeafBlind person trying to access the phone system did not have a reliable way to do so. Calling 911 was not an option. While iOS 10 introduced a TTY Mode reviewed in the above linked article from a braille user's perspective, it had some issues.

Read More: "DeafBlind Individuals Now Have a Way to Use Text Relay on iOS With Braille" <https://www.applevis.com/blog/advocacy-assistive-technology-braille-ios-apps-iphone/deafblind-individuals-now-have-way-use>

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**\*\*12** From Smart Brief on Leadership

**How a "Saved by the Bell" Star Overcomes His Blindness**

Isaac Lidsky, an entrepreneur who played Weasel on "Saved by the Bell: The New Class," graduated from Harvard at 19 and clerked at the Supreme Court -- all while battling a degenerative eye disease, says circumstances don't guide how we live our lives. "How those circumstances manifest themselves in our realities is within our control," he says.

**How to Live Eyes Wide Open in a World That Can’t See Clearly**

If you want to read an inspirational story of triumph over adversity, of overcoming challenges, this is it.

Isaac Lidsky played “Weasel” on Saved by the Bell: The New Class. He graduated – at nineteen – from Harvard with degrees in math and computer science. He then went on to Harvard Law School and then served as a law clerk at the Supreme Court for Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Sandra Day O’Connor. His legal career had him winning all of his dozen plus appeals in federal court before he went on the start a tech company. Enough? No. He then went into construction and succeeded again. He also has founded a non-profit called Hope for Vision.

Wow. That’s an amazing track record of success in multiple fields. All that success and he makes it seem so easy. Then you learn that he was born with Retinitis Pigmentosa, a rare degenerative disease that caused gradual loss of sight and now blindness.

Isaac has learned to live with his “Eyes Wide Open.” His new book is called Eyes Wide Open: Overcoming Obstacles and Recognizing Opportunities in a World That Can’t See Clearly. I found it a powerfully motivating read and followed up with the actor turned entrepreneur to learn more about his uniquely positive attitude in the midst of what would stop many of us in our tracks.

**Stay Positive Despite the Circumstances**

You’ve been through trial after trial and continue to see success. How do you stay positive despite the circumstances?

In every moment, we choose how we want to live our lives and who we want to be, no matter what circumstances we face. There are always people who did far more with far less and were far happier doing it. So, it’s not our circumstances that govern the lives we experience. How those circumstances manifest themselves in our realities is within our control.

I saw this as I lost my sight. With this new vision, I realized that my life is my choice. It’s that simple. In the face of great challenges, you can choose to live reactively as a victim, or choose to proactively take control, with awareness and accountability. For me, the “right” answer is clear, though it is often the more difficult choice, too.

**Overcome Your Fear**

Talk about fear. How does this limit us? What do you do when it is gnawing at your mind?

Fear is powerfully pernicious. When we confront the unknown in times of change or crisis, fear exploits our ignorance. In our fears, we perceive the worst-case scenario, the most awful outcome, the ugliest possibility. If we’re not careful, we can experience this concoction of our fears—most often baseless—as “truth.”

It gets worse. In the false reality of our fears, we often see heroes and villains in our lives—people who control our fate. We blame them, credit them, curse them, celebrate them, pray to them for rescue. This is how your fears become self-realizing—when you accept fear’s premise, outsource your destiny, and await the inevitable result.

To break fear’s spell, focus intently on the difference between what you know and what you think you know. The latter is fear’s domain. Recognize your heroes and villains as figments of your imagination. Ask yourself: What, precisely, is the most discrete, concrete problem I face right now, and what can I do about it—what is my best next step? You will not get from A to Z if you do not get from A to B.

Your career is unique to say the least. Saved by the Bell, Supreme Court clerk, and then business entrepreneur. Now, author. What drives you to this unprecedented level of success in multiple fields?

At the core of a life lived eyes wide open is an understanding of what success and value look like to you in your life. What is important? How do you want to be spending your time—at home and at work? Who do you want to be—as a boss or colleague, as a friend or spouse, as a parent or child or sibling? These are tough questions, but we’re answering them every moment, whether we like it or not, realize it or not, believe it or not.

I’ve chosen to be aware of my answers, and accountable for them to myself and my family. Over the years, those answers have changed—success, value, and importance have evolved for me with the course of my life. Accordingly, numerous times I’ve closed certain chapters, embraced new challenges, and reorganized my priorities. I’ve been fortunate to obtain great outcomes in several different endeavors along the way. But success, I believe, is in actually striving for what you truly value, not in the results.

**Learn** **from Your Critics**

Talk about critics. I love that chapter, especially. What have you learned from critics?

We harbor in our minds an internal critic. It’s that nasty voice that is quick to pass judgment, quick to tell you what others will think and say about you, quick to tell you what you cannot do. These critics guarantee our failure by insisting upon perfection, which is impossible. They inhibit our progress by distracting us with evaluation and comparison. They overpower us with a lofty perspective, soaring high above it all—so high that we cannot see the paths of progress down below, the rate of progress appears impossibly slow, and the magnitude of our aspirations is overwhelming.

But we choose our own scale. We can silence our critics with focus on the moment, with momentum, with the commitment to strive, with the peace of conviction, by harnessing the strength that is within us all. The critic’s circus of distraction and destruction isn’t real. It is just noise, unless you choose to listen.

**Listen at a New Level**

What’s your perspective on listening? “Ears wide open” got my attention. How do we all become better listeners?

Most of us do a poor job listening to one another. Part of the problem is distraction. In our frenetic, digitally-enabled world of information overload, we struggle to pay attention. Even when we’re focused, however, we can become distracted from what we’re hearing by what we’re seeing. Inherently visual creatures, we imbue facial expressions and gestures with assumed meaning, confusing our unreliable impressions and interpretations with the speaker’s intended message.

When we use them properly, words have an unbounded potential to facilitate communication. But it requires intention—we must intend to understand and intend to be understood. That’s what “ears wide open” is all about. It’s about active effort to understand another’s meaning, and actively conveying your meaning with clarity.

**How do you hope this book affects others?**

Going blind gave me the vision to live and lead eyes wide open, aware of my role in creating the reality I experience and accountable for my life. It’s a vision that is liberating and empowering—it has brought me immeasurable joy, fulfillment and success, at home and at work. I wrote Eyes Wide Open to show others how to see what I see, and to inspire them to choose to do so. I hope that others will find in the book practical, valuable insights and techniques to create the lives they want for themselves—in their careers, in their relationships, and in their hearts and souls.

For more information, [Eyes Wide Open: Overcoming Obstacles and Recognizing Opportunities in a World That Can’t See Clearly](https://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0143129570/leaderinsigh-20).

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**\*\*13** This week on Eyes On Success

1723 Encore of 1233 An Interview with Ted Henter

If you use the JAWS screen reader, chances are you've heard of Ted Henter who founded Henter-Joyce and later sold the company to Freedom Scientific. This week, Nancy and Peter Torpey talk with Ted about his contributions to assistive technologies and other projects. If you think you know where the "Joyce" came from in Henter-Joyce, be prepared for a surprise!

The audio and show notes for this episode can be found at:

[www.EyesOnSuccess.net](http://www.EyesOnSuccess.net)

The podcast is also available on iTunes.

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**\*\*14** Shared by Nfbnet

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Language to End Subminimum Wages Included in New Minimum Wage Bill**

Baltimore, Maryland (May 25, 2017): The National Federation of the Blind today applauded the inclusion of language in the Raise the Wage Act of 2017, simultaneously introduced in the House and the Senate, which calls for the end of the payment of subminimum wages to workers with disabilities.

Mark A. Riccobono, President of the National Federation of the Blind, said: "The National Federation of the Blind has advocated for the elimination of the subminimum wage since our founding. The recognition of this issue by leaders in both houses of Congress and both parties confirms that the time has long passed to eliminate the unfair and separate wage system for people with disabilities. Time and time again, we have demonstrated that the idea of people with disabilities being less productive is simply an antiquated misconception that has been allowed to permeate throughout society. This wrong and harmful notion has resulted in multiple generations of disabled Americans being grossly underpaid and overly reliant on government assistance programs to survive. We want to work. We want to rid society of these low expectations. For those reasons, we applaud the promotion of economic self-sufficiency for people with disabilities set forth in the bill."

Under current law, there is no minimum as to how little an employee with disabilities can be paid. Some workers earn pennies per hour. Section 6 of the Raise the Wage Act of 2017 would implement an immediate minimum wage of $4.25 for all workers classified under Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938. This absolute minimum wage rate would increase by two dollars per year until it matched the minimum wage earned by the rest of the American workforce. At which point, employers would no longer be permitted to pay employees with disabilities a subminimum wage.

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**\*\*15** Broker News Saverino & Associates, Mark Saverino

Reminder that using Goodness Knows products each quarter can increase your rebate. The items are as follows:

**Mars** Goodnessknows Snack Squares

49715-Peachy Cherry-12ct/4cs/1.2oz

49718-Nutty Apple-12ct/4cs/1.2oz

49721-Very Cranberry-12ct/4cs/1.2oz

Also **Mars** new items are available now:

52717-M&M’s White Chocolate-24ct/12cs/1.5oz

52708-Twix Dark Single-36ct/10ca/1.79oz

52711-Twix Dark Sharing Size-24ct/6cs/3.02oz

50881-M&M’s Caramel Singles-24ct/12cs/1.41oz

50884-M&M’s Caramel Sharing Size-24ct/6cs/2.83oz

**Harvest Hill** is a new manufacturer for Saverino & Associates

The following are some of the brands that will be available from Harvest Hill

Beverage Company; Very Fine, Sunny D, Juicy Juice, and Fruit20

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**\*\*16** RSA Buying Group Information

RSA Management Purchase Power Deals

Earn Extra Rebates on the following:

NEW DEALS THIS WEEK

KLEMENTS

Deal Date: THROUGH JUNE, 2017

Rebates Products

$8.00 per case Klements Original Snack Meat Sticks– ALL FLAVORS

LILLY’S HUMMUS

Deal Date: INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

16% per case LILLY’S HUMMUS – ALL FLAVORS

Deals ending in June

OREO

Deal Date: DELIVERY JUNE 30, 2017

Rebates Products

$0.2 per unit Oreo Chocolate Bar

Deals ending in December

TALKING RAIN - SPARKLING ICE (RSA EXCLUSIVE)

Deal Date: THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2017

Rebates Products

$0.22 per unit 8 oz. Sparkling ICE Water Cans 8 ct. – ALL FLAVORS

$0.145 per unit 17 oz. Sparkling ICE Water Bottles12 ct. – ALL FLAVORS

FERRERO

Deal Date: THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2017

Rebates Products

10% per case Tic Tacs – All Products

10% per case Ferrero Rocher– All Products

10% per case Raffaello – All Products

10% per case Nutella – All Products

10% per case Nutella and Go– All Products

BISCOMERICA - SWEET SERENITY CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

Deal Date: THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2017

Rebates Products

$0.04 per unit\* 2 oz. Sweet Serenity Choco Chip Cookies 60 ct. (#59961)

$0.04 per unit\* 3 oz. Sweet Serenity Choco Chip Cookies 48 ct. (#54809)

\*Group must purchase 2000 cases per quarter; otherwise rebate will be $0.02 per unit.

HINT WATER

Deal Date: THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2017

Rebates Products

$1.00 per case Hint 100% Natural Goodness Water – ALL FLAVORS

KLEMENT’S MEAT SNACKS

Deal Date: THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2017

Rebates Products

10% per case Klement’s Meat Snacks – All Products

NY DELI (RAYBERN’S)

Deal Date: THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2017

Rebates Products

14% per case 5.0-6.5 oz Heat n Serve Premium Wrapped Frozen Sandwiches – All Products

PLANTERS

Deal Date: DELIVERY BY DECEMBER 31, 2017

Rebates Products

$2.88 per case 2 oz. Planters Peanuts

$1.44 per case Planters Trail Mix Nut and Chocolate

POPZ CUP (FORMELY INTERNATIONAL CUP CO.)

Deal Date: THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2017

Rebates Products

$3.29 per case 12 oz. Single Poly Vending Paper Hot Cup – 1500 ct.

$3.20 per case 8.25 oz. Single Poly Vending Paper Hot Cup – 2000 ct.

$1.51 per case 12 oz. Black Lids for Vending Hot Cups – 1000 ct.

$1.17 per case 8.25 oz. Black Lids for Vending Hot Cups – 1000 ct.

$3.22 per case 16 oz. Single poly Manual Paper Hot Cups – 1000 ct.

$2.55 per case 12 oz. Single poly Manual Paper Hot Cups – 1000 ct.

$2.26 per case 10 oz. Single poly Manual Paper Hot Cups – 1000 ct.

$1.81 per case Black Lids for all Manual Paper Hot Cups – 1000 ct.

TAYLOR CANDY

Deal Date: THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2017

Rebates Products

4% per case Taylor Candy – All Products

SPLENDA

Deal Date: THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2017

Rebates Products

$3.30 per case Splenda 4/400 ct. Sweetener Packets

$3.00 per case Splenda 2000 ct. Bulk and 12/50 ct. Sweetener Packets

$2.60 per case Splenda 12/100 ct. Sweetener Packets

$1.25 per case Splenda 500 ct. Bulk Sweetener Packets

WELCH’S

Deal Date: DELIVERY BY DECEMBER 31, 2017

Rebates Products

$.01 per unit Welch’s, Gummi Factory, Sour Jacks, Sun-Maid, Fisher – ALL FLAVORS

VITNERS/SNACK KING (RSA EXCLUSIVE)

Deal Date: THROUGH DECEMBER, 2017

Rebates Products

$0.02 per unit Vitners and Snack King Products– ALL FLAVORS

Indefinite End Date

ALMARK EGGS

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

8% per case Almark 2 pack Eggs – All Products

BEANITO’S

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$1.00 per case Bean Chips and Puffs - ALL FLAVORS

BLISTEX

Deal Date: INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$2.00 per case Blistex Lip Balm – ALL VARIETIES

BOLTHOUSE FARMS

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$2.20 per case Bolthouse drinks - ALL FLAVORS

COLD STONE CREAMERY

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$1.50 per case All Flavors of Milk Shakers

COOL HAUS

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

20% per case Choco. Chip, Van Bean, Snickerdoodle, Salted Caramel Ice Cream

COUNTRY ARCHER

Deal Date: INDEFINITIE

Rebates Products

15% per case Country Archer Beef Jerky – ALL FLAVORS

DAISY’S BAKERY, INC

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

8% per case Individually Wrapped Muffin, Cake, Brownie, Pie, Cookie – ALL FLAVORS

FIJI WATER

Deal Date: INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$1.50 per case Fiji Water

FRUVE SMOOTHIES & TEAS

Deal Date: INDEFINITIE

Rebates Products

$3.60 per case Fruve Smoothies and Kid’s Smoothies – ALL FLAVORS

$3.00 per case Fruve Teas – ALL FLAVORS

GRAZE SNACKS

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

8% per case Graze Snacks – All Products

GREEN CHILI FOODS COMPANY

Deal Date: INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$1.00 per case 7 oz. Burritos – 12 count

HiBALL ENERGY AND ALTA PALLA

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$5.00 per case HiBall Energy – 24 ct. case – ALL FLAVORS

$2.50 per case Hi Ball Energy – 12 ct. case – ALL FLAVORS

$2.50 per case Alta Palla – 24 ct. case – ALL FLAVORS

HARVEST HILL

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

12% per case Juicy Juice, Veryfine Juice and Fruit2O – All flavors

HORIZON

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$2.00 per case Horizon Organic Cheese and Stick Bites – All Products

HP HOOD DAIRY

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$0.96 per case 12 oz. Hershey’s Low Fat Milk and Low fat Chocolate Milk

$0.96 per case 12 oz. Hershey’s Creamy Chocolate, Cookies n’ Crème and Strawberry Milkshake

$1.20 per case 10 oz. Almond Breeze Vanilla and Chocolate Almond Milk

J&J FOODS

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

5% per case Kim & Scott’s IW Flavored Soft Pretzels and IW Pretzel Melts

5% per case Mary B’s IW Biscuit Breakfast Melts

5% per case Corazona’s HeartBar Oatmeal Squares

JJ’s PIES

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$1.80 per case JJ’s Bakery Boxed Pies – ALL FLAVORS

J& J’s GOURMET PRETZELS

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$1.20 per case J&J’s Gourmet Pretzels – All Products

JIMMY BARS

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

15% per case Jimmy Bars - All Products

LIFESTYLE FOODS

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

5% per case Lifestyle Foods Fresh Food – All Products

LUCY’S COOKIES

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$1.15 per case Choco Chip, Cinnamon Thin, Ginger Snap and Brownie Crisp Cookie

MY GOURMET TUNA KITS

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$3.24 per case My Gourmet Tuna Kits – All Products

NATHAN’S PRETZEL DOGS

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$2.50 per case Nathan’s Pretzel Dogs – All Products

REICHEL DIPPIN STIX PRO2SNAX

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

4% per case Reichel Dippin Stix Pro2Snaxs – All Products

SEAPOINT FARMS

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

10% off per case Dry Roasted Edamame

$1.00 per case Beanitos and Beanitos Puffs

SILK ALMOND MILK

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$3.00 per case Silk Almond Milk – All Products

STEAZ TEA

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$1.50 per case ALL FLAVORS

STOK COLD-BREW COFFEE

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$3.00 per case 13.7 oz Stok Cold Brew Coffee – ALL FLAVORS

TAMPICO DRINKS

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$1.00 per case Tampico Drinks - All Products

TITAN TEA

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$1.50 per case Titan Teas - ALL FLAVORS

UMPQUA OATS

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$2.00 per case Umpqua Oatmeals - ALL FLAVORS

VITA COCO – ORDER THROUGH AUTHORIZED DPSG ONLY

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$1.00 per case 11.1 oz. Vita Coco– ALL FLAVORS

$1.50 per case 17 oz. Vita Coco – ALL FLAVORS

WELCH’S FRUIT SNACKS

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$2.88 per case Buddy Bears, Sour Jacks, Nuclear SQWorms, Sun Maid Chocolate covered Raisins and Fisher Chocolate covered Peanuts.

$1.44 per case Welch’s School Items – ALL FLAVORS

$0.96 per case Welch’s Fruit Snacks – ALL FLAVORS except school items

$0.96 per case Gummi Factory – ALL FLAVORS

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