

February 9, 2021

The Honorable Emanuel "Chris" Welch
Illinois House Speaker



Dear Speaker Welch,

Clearly 2020 was a year rife with unprecedented and immediate challenges, many of which have carried over into 2021. But beneath them are systemic and structural issues that have plagued Illinois for years – fragmentation of local government, escalating tax burdens, and inefficient public services. These need to be addressed, and that requires deliberate and decisive action from the Illinois General Assembly and the Governor's Office. As you know well, it is often the most vulnerable members of society who feel these burdens of Illinois' crisis of governance most. Meaningful transformation of how Illinois and its communities govern themselves, fund themselves and operate is part of, not separate from, goals to make Illinois more equitable, sustainable and prosperous for all.

Created in 2014, [Transform Illinois](#) is committed to better coordinating research, advocacy, legislative and policy implementation activities that will improve the effectiveness of government service delivery in Illinois. Transform Illinois is a voluntary collection of individual lawmakers, research organizations, government officials and advocacy groups, including DuPage County, Metropolitan Planning Council, Civic Federation, Better Government Association, and many more.

Transform Illinois' policy priorities for 2021 include:

- Reform the redistricting process to ensure it is both equitable and democratic;
- Create pathways to local government consolidation and greater efficiency; and
- Produce transparent, comprehensive and reliable government data.

The members of Transform Illinois stand ready to work with you on these issues and more. However, none of these important issues can be addressed meaningfully and with sufficient public input unless the Illinois House of Representatives authorizes remote legislating during its upcoming one-day session scheduled for February 10, 2020. Remote legislating is not ideal, but it is much better than the alternatives: abandoning legislative responsibilities or risking the health of lawmakers and staff. Furthermore, lawmakers who were forced to skip in-person attendance during recent legislative sessions due to health concerns were not able to represent their constituents. While Transform Illinois is supportive of the newly proposed rule in the Illinois House that will authorize remote committee and task force meetings that include public access, the new rules do not allow for remote legislative sessions. Therefore, the undersigned Transform Illinois respectfully encourage the Illinois House of Representatives to **authorize remote legislative sessions and committee meetings, including public access via widely available technology**

Transform Illinois greatly appreciates the opportunity to provide our priorities to the 102nd General Assembly and our perspective on the importance of implementing remote legislating.

Sincerely,

DuPage County Board Chairman Dan Cronin
Reform for Illinois
Region 1 Planning Council

Metropolitan Planning Council
Civic Federation

Better Government Association
League of Women Voters

cc: Illinois Governor JB Pritzker
Illinois Senate President Don Harmon
Illinois Senate Republican Leader Dan McConchie
Illinois House Republican Leader Jim Durkin