



Governor Rauner announces appointments

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CHICAGO – Governor Bruce Rauner today announced he has made appointments to the Illinois Student Assistance Commission, the Illinois Civil Service Commission, the Prisoner Review Board, and Rare Disease Commission. He also made a reappointment to the Illinois Board of Higher Education. Additionally, he announced the creation of the administration's Chief Diversity Officer.

Name: Niketa Brar

Position: Commissioner – Illinois Student Assistance Commission

Governor Bruce Rauner has appointed Niketa Brar to the Illinois Student Assistance Commission. Brar's professional background in education and in state government will be influential in her new role.

Brar previously served as the Managing Director of Post-Secondary Policy for the Illinois Secretary of Education in the Office of Governor Rauner. In that role, she advised in the development of education and workforce systems to improve pathways toward post-secondary education. She currently serves as the Director of Policy for the City of Chicago's Treasurer's Office where she develops and implements strategic planning efforts for all Chicago's 77 neighborhoods. Other roles include senior policy and program manager for Advance Illinois.

Brar graduated with her bachelor's degree from George Washington University. She received her master's degree from American University. She lives in Chicago.

Name: Dave Luechtefeld

Position: Commissioner – Illinois Civil Service Commission

Governor Bruce Rauner has appointed former State Senator Dave Luechtefeld to the Illinois Civil Service Commission. Luechtefeld's experience as a public servant – both as a public school teacher and in the General Assembly – make him well suited for the position.

For more than 20 years, Luechtefeld represented the people of southern Illinois as a State Senator in the Illinois General Assembly, serving as Assistant Minority Leader, the Minority Spokesperson on the Education and Higher Education Committees, as well as serving on the Executive, Financial Institutions and Agriculture Committees. Prior to his service as a legislator, Luechtefeld was a teacher and coached sports teams in the Okawville school district for more than 30 years.

Luechtefeld graduated from St. Louis University and earned his master's degree from Southern Illinois University – Edwardsville. He lives in Okawville.

Name: Ellen Johnson

Position: Board Member – Prisoner Review Board

Governor Bruce Rauner has appointed Ellen Johnson to the Prisoner Review Board. Johnson's previous work with the Illinois Department of Corrections will be an asset to the Board.

Johnson served as a senior parole agent with the Illinois Department of Corrections before retiring in 2015. In that role, she supervised parolees including field visits and interacting with social services institutions and agencies. She previously was a psychologist for the Illinois Youth Center in St. Charles.

Johnson received her B.A. in biology and psychology from Elmhurst College. She received her master's in counseling psychology from Northern Illinois University. She lives in St. Charles.

Name: Virginia Martinez

Position: Board Member – Prisoner Review Board

Governor Bruce Rauner has appointed Virginia Martinez to the Prisoner Review Board. Martinez's knowledge of nonprofit board management and public policy will lead to success in her role at the Prisoner Review Board.

Martinez is the principal of her consulting firm, Virginia Martinez Consulting. In that role, she provides nonprofit boards with training to improve nonprofit governance. In

the past, she served as a senior policy analyst for the Illinois Latino Family Commission, legislative staff attorney with the Mexican American Legal Defense & Education Fund (MALDEF), and Executive Director of Mujeres Latinas En Acción.

Martinez graduated from the University of Illinois- Chicago with her bachelor's in sociology. She received her law degree from DePaul University's College of Law. She lives in Oak Park.

Name: Jay Bergman

Position: Board Member – Illinois Board of Higher Education

Governor Bruce Rauner has reappointed Jay Bergman to the Illinois Board of Higher Education. Bergman's experience on the board and in management and finance bring an important perspective to the board.

Currently, Bergman is the president of J.D. Bergman Corporation, a land development company. He has served on the Illinois Board of Education since 2001. He has also served as a member of the Illinois State University Board of Trustees. Additionally, he serves as a board member of the American Red Cross of Chicago and Northern Illinois, as a trustee of the Chicago Zoological Society and as a board member of the Community Foundation of Will County.

Bergman graduated from Illinois State University. He lives in Joliet.

Name: Erin Johnson

Position: Chief Diversity Officer & Associate General Counsel

Governor Bruce Rauner has selected Erin Johnson as the administration's first Chief Diversity Officer. In this position, Erin will work with the Governor's Office and state agencies to ensure the recruitment of excellent minority candidates to serve in our Administration and that we serve all the communities in our State.

Erin has served as an Associate General Counsel in the Office of the Governor since June of 2016. She handles all legal work related to issues of public safety and child welfare. Erin also manages the clemency process and helped drive the elimination of the clemency backlog. She was previously an Associate at SmithAmundsen LLC where she litigated medical malpractice cases. She also taught 7th and 8th grade math in the School District of Philadelphia through Teach for America.

Erin received her bachelor's degree from Dartmouth College, her master's degree from the University of Pennsylvania and her law degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She lives in Chicago.

Rare Disease Commission

- Nirav Shah – Director of Public Health
- Felicia Norwood – Director of Healthcare and Family Services
- Jennifer Hammer – Director of Insurance
- Christine Presta – Respiratory Care Therapist specializing in Cystic Fibrosis Care
- Dr. Michael Tarantino – Medical Director and President of the Bleeding and Clotting Disorders