



Governor Rauner acts to provide better services to taxpayers

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-Makes Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum own agency-

--Consolidates Human Rights Commission with the Department of Human Rights—

CHICAGO - Governor Bruce Rauner today signed a series of Executive Orders to improve and streamline Illinois state government. Executive Orders 17-01, 17-02 and 17-03 will eliminate redundancies and simplify the organizational structure of the Executive Branch to deliver more efficient government and drive a better value for taxpayers.

"We have made government transformation a priority in order to deliver the best services to taxpayers at the best value," Governor Rauner said. "We owe it to our citizens to be good stewards of the state's resources, and these changes will deliver on that promise."

To realize the full potential of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum (ALPLM), Executive Order 17-01 will make the museum a standalone agency and consolidate the remaining functions of the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (HPA) into the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

The ALPLM is a world-class institution with very specific and specialized needs. This action will ensure the ALPLM will be able to live up to its potential as a world-class facility dedicated to the legacy of one of our nation's greatest president. Alan Lowe, the current Library Director of the ALPLM, will become the inaugural Executive Director of the agency. The Executive Order will also create an ALPLM Board of Trustees, which will consist of 11 members appointed by the Governor and approved by the Senate.

"The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum is a wonderful institution for Illinois and, really, for the world. But it can be even better, and one way to make that happen is to let it stand on its own two feet," said ALPLM Executive Director Alan Lowe. "I'm confident this change will produce a new focus on the presidential library's mission and a better response to the challenges and opportunities of the future."

The remaining functions of HPA will transfer to DNR and be housed under the Office of Land Management in the new Division of Historic Preservation to maintain and manage the State's historic sites. The HPA Board of trustees will be abolished as part of this transition.

"The Department of Natural Resources has tremendous expertise in operating and maintaining sites for public enjoyment. The Illinois Historic Preservation Agency knows how to bring to life the state's amazing heritage. Together, we'll make sure this consolidation is seamless for our visitors and results in an enhanced experience," said Illinois Historic Preservation Agency Director Heidi Brown-McCreery.

Executive Order 17-02 furthers the administration's efforts to provide better services to Illinois residents by consolidating the Human Rights Commission (HRC) into the Department of Human Rights (DHR). This move will help expedite anti-discrimination cases brought by Illinois citizens. Currently, there are more than 1,000 cases pending at HRC and the average wait time after filing a charge of discrimination is more than four years. Additionally, this consolidation will save taxpayers half a million dollars in the first year alone.

“While the Illinois Human Rights Act was created with the intention of unifying state anti-discrimination protections, maintaining two agencies with conflicting administrative operations has led to an unforgivable backlog that hurts those who need our services the most,” said DHR Acting Director Janice Glenn. “This consolidation will allow us to more effectively utilize resources and modernize the process by which discrimination charges move through our system.”

The consolidation of these two agencies will produce faster action in both investigative and legal proceedings. Importantly, though, consolidation will not compromise the HRC’s independent appellate review of these cases required by law. Illinois citizens and businesses use the HRC for these types of cases to avoid more costly litigation in civil court. The consolidated agency model will be similar to the model used in human rights agencies City of Chicago and New York City and in states such as New Jersey, Massachusetts, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and Minnesota.

“Illinois has a rich history of strong civil rights protections and this transition will allow our unified agency to fully realize its mission of protecting our residents from unlawful discrimination,” said HRC Chair Rose Mary Bombela-Tobias. “I look forward to working with IDHR and our Commissioners on strengthening our ability to assist those who work with our agency.”

Finally, the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity will transfer the functions of the Office of Recycling and Energy to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and the Office of Coal Development to DNR under Executive Order 17-03. The functions of the Energy and Recycling Office and the Coal Office are aligned with the missions and expertise of IEPA and DNR, respectively, and this transfer will allow both offices to continue to advance their missions within agencies that better suit their functions.

IEPA is responsible for safeguarding our state’s environment, and the mission of the Office of Energy and Recycling is aimed at reducing energy consumption and promoting clean, renewable energy. Moving this office enhances IEPA’s mission to safeguard our environment and reduce pollution in Illinois. Additionally, transferring

the Coal Office to DNR enhances DNR's mission to manage, conserve, and protect Illinois' natural resources.