

Gov. Pritzker Welcomes University Of Illinois Urbana-champaign Students Back To School With \$140 Million Campus Investment

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CHAMPAIGN – Governor JB Pritzker today joined University of Illinois System President Tim Killeen, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Chancellor Robert Jones, and other stakeholders for a back-to-school event where he announced plans for

the construction of a new, world-class facility as well as large-scale renovations and updates to two centrally located buildings. Made possible by the governor's bipartisan Rebuild Illinois capital plan, the first in nearly a decade, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) will receive \$140 million in state funds, matched by \$52 million in non-state funding for a total investment of \$192 million.

The project will take place in four phases and includes the complete restoration of the existing iconic Altgeld Hall and the replacement of Illini Hall with a new facility in its location for the Departments of Mathematics and Statistics. It will create a significant amount of space, and the new Illini Hall will become home to a data science center as part of the Champaign-Urbana Hub of the Illinois Innovation Network. Construction on the first phase began last month and full project completion is expected in June 2026. The work will be overseen by the Illinois Capital Development Board (CDB).

"The Rebuild Illinois plan recognizes the importance of the University of Illinois system as a foundation for innovation and a core building block for our state's workforce of the future," said Governor JB Pritzker. "What's happening with these investments in higher education is a microcosm of what we're doing across the state. We're fixing decades-old problems, creating and supporting good jobs, vaulting our state into the future, and invigorating opportunities for the next generation – including the thousands of young people who call U of I home."

"This investment in the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and the Illinois Innovation Network is an investment in the people of Illinois and a better future for us all," University of Illinois System President Tim Killeen said. "The funding, made possible by the foresight of Gov. Pritzker and supported by other elected leaders, will provide a key, new home for the kind of cutting-edge data science that will power scientific advancement and economic improvement, and make certain that Altgeld Hall remains a vital part of the heart of the Urbana-Champaign campus, as well."

"The Illinois Capital Development Board is proud to begin work on the next phase of design for this significant project on the UIUC campus," said CDB Executive Director Jim Underwood. "The new facility at Illini Hall as well as the restorations to Altgeld Hall will continue enhancing the institution's capacity for innovation."

Including the Rebuild Illinois funding being provided for the Altgeld and Illini Hall projects, the capital plan will invest a total of \$686.3 million into the University of Illinois system over the upcoming years. \$586.3 million in funding will go towards new construction, large-scale renovations, and deferred maintenance to repair infrastructure that was neglected during previous administrations. The university system will also receive \$100 million in capital funds to support quantum science infrastructure.

“This investment is critically important, as it will firmly establish the Champaign-Urbana hub of the Illinois Innovation Network. We are proud it recognizes the unmatched expertise in data sciences and advanced analytics we have at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign,” said Urbana Chancellor Robert Jones. “The data science field is fast-growing, and the Altgeld-Illini Hall projects will be incubators for collaborative research and education in data science, as well as other mathematical sciences for generations to come.”

“I am grateful for Governor Pritzker’s continued support for UIUC and this community. These capital investments will ensure that students, faculty, and staff can continue to work in buildings that are, not only safe, but promote innovation and scholarship,” said State Representative Carol Ammons (D-Urbana). “There is no better investment Illinois can make than towards its own students and facilities, so I applaud the work Governor Pritzker’s administration is doing to make sure UIUC has the resources it needs to build back stronger than ever.”

"The University of Illinois is a pillar of the Champaign-Urbana community, and I'm thrilled to see students returning to the newly renovated Illini Hall and Atgeld Hall on campus," said State Senator Scott Bennett (D-Champaign). “This transformational redevelopment will serve current and future students and help the university continue to grow in the coming years.”

"We are very fortunate to have this large investment in the University of Illinois. The U of I is a powerful economic driver for Champaign County and these types of investments make not only the University stronger, but the entire county. These projects will create both academic opportunities as well as good paying jobs that are needed for these important capital investments. We in Champaign County are grateful for Governor Pritzker's leadership on this issue and his focus on investing in Champaign County," said Champaign County Board Chair Kyle Patterson.

The historic Rebuild Illinois capital plan passed with bipartisan super-majorities and will invest \$45 billion in roads, bridges, railways, universities, early childhood centers, and state facilities like the new crime lab and veterans’ homes, creating and supporting an estimated 540,000 jobs over the life of the six-year plan and revitalizing local economies across the state.