



# 2023 ILLINOIS LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

**Women Employed** is leading or co-leading with partners to advance the following legislation in 2023. These priorities will ensure that women—especially women in low-paid jobs and Black and Latina/x women—can build their income and wealth.

## **Paid Family & Medical Leave**

Sen. Villivalam & Rep. Harper  
*Law in 11 states & D.C.*

All workers will need paid leave to care for their own or a family member's serious illness, or to welcome a new child. But in Illinois, 59% of workers cannot even take unpaid leave, forcing them to make impossible decisions about their health and their ability to care for their families. Illinois must create a state-run family and medical leave program and make a difference for thousands of Illinois families.



## **Full & Fair Wage**

Rep. Lilly & Sen. Pacione-Zayas  
*Law in 8 states & D.C.*

When the Illinois minimum wage was successfully raised to \$15/hour as of 2025, tipped workers were left out of the opportunity to earn a full and fair wage. The subminimum wage for tipped workers is a legacy of slavery that disproportionately affects women and people of color. It is an economic, racial and gender justice issue that has only worsened since the onslaught of COVID-19. We need to eliminate the subminimum wage for tipped workers in Illinois.



## **FUNDING PRIORITIES**

### **\$50 million more for MAP**

For too many students, the decision about whether or not to go to college hinges on whether they can afford it. The Monetary Award Program (MAP) grant helps Illinois students pay for college—but it is still not up to its 2002 purchasing power. We need to invest an additional \$50 million in the Monetary Award Program to ensure college is in reach for Illinois students.



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## EFFORTS WE'RE SUPPORTING

**Salary Transparency:** In 2019, Illinois passed a law preventing employers from asking job applicants for their salary history, a first step toward addressing pay inequities. Requiring that employers are transparent about the salary ranges for their open positions is the next step.

**Child Tax Credit:** An Illinois Child Tax Credit (CTC) is the most immediate, meaningful and direct tool to help Illinois' families with the rising costs of living. It reduces child poverty, decreases food insecurity, strengthens small businesses and local economies, and supports workers struggling to balance child care and work.

**Higher Education Funding:** Higher education continues to try to restore the funding that after years of cuts and a lack of investment. The Illinois Board of Higher Education's proposed budget includes needed investments in universities, community colleges, adult education, career and technical education, the Minority Teachers of Illinois scholarship, and workforce training.

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## ABOUT WOMEN EMPLOYED

*For 50 years, Women Employed (WE) has been on the forefront of every major advancement for working women in Chicago, Illinois, and the nation—from winning family and medical leave and fair pay legislation, to outlawing sexual harassment and pregnancy discrimination and opening doors to quality education and training programs through financial aid and other supports. WE's mission is to improve the economic status of women and remove barriers to economic equity, with a goal of closing the wealth gap at the intersection of race and gender.*