Rural Illinois:
New Challenges, New Opportunities

Annual Report to the Governor
and General Assembly

Prepared by
Lieutenant Governor Evelyn Sanguinetti, Chairman
Governor's Rural Affairs Council
and
Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs
Western Illinois University

2015

Member Agencies and Associations of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council

Illinois Department on Aging
Illinois Department of Agriculture
Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity
Illinois Department of Employment Security
Illinois Department of Human Services
Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Illinois Department of Public Health
Illinois Department of Transportation
Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
Illinois Community College Board
Illinois State Board of Education
Illinois Finance Authority
Illinois Housing Development Authority
Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs
Southern Illinois University
University of Illinois - Cooperative Extension
Illinois Agricultural Association/Illinois Farm Bureau
Rural Partners

Citizen Members

Heather-Hampton Knodle (Montgomery County)
Chair of the Central Illinois Economic Development Authority

Robin Rose, BSN, MHA
Chief Operating Officer & Chief Nursing Executive
Gibson Area Hospital and Health Services

Gregory Scott, R.N., M.S., EMT-P, CHEC
Director, McLean County Area EMS System

Mark Rothert
Assistant County Administrator for Economic Development in Peoria

Karen Stallman
Director of Continuing Education for SIU-Carbondale

The purpose of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council is to develop and implement strategies for improving delivery of State of Illinois services to rural Illinois and to expand opportunities and enhance the quality of life for rural residents. The Lieutenant Governor, as Chairman of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council, and the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs at Western Illinois University shall continue to issue an Annual Report in accordance with Executive Order 4 of May 18, 2011, and Executive Order 13 or October 11, 1991.

Copies of these Executive Orders are located in the Appendix.

Table of Contents

Members of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council ii
List of Tables and Figures vi
Introduction 1
Governor's Rural Affairs Council 1
Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs 2
Annual Report 3
The State of Rural Illinois 3
Conditions in Rural Illinois 3
Population 3
Employment 7
Wages and Income 8
Unemployment 9
GRAC Activities 12
Priorities for the Future 12
Conclusions 14
References 15
Appendices 17

List of Tables and Figures

Figure 1. Metro and Nonmetro Counties in Illinois....4
Table 1. Rural Versus Urban Demographic Change in Illinois and U.S. by Age Cohort....5
Figure 2. Population Change 1990 - 2013....6
Table 2. Peak Population of Metro and Nonmetro Counties....7
Table 3. Illinois Metro and Nonmetro Employment by Sector, 2014....8
Figure 3. Real Average Wage Per Job, 1990 - 2013....9
Figure 4. Median Household Income, 2013....10
Figure 5. Unemployment Rate, May 2015....11

Introduction

Illinois is a diverse state with major cities, small towns, and open spaces. While Illinois' metropolitan regions are vital centers of industry, home to world class cultural institutions, and drivers for the nation's economy, Illinois' rural areas are just as important. Vibrant rural communities offer a high quality of life and are great places to live and work, raise families, and run businesses. The state's farmers help to feed the nation and the world and many of the goods manufactured in rural Illinois are sold in the global marketplace. While Illinois' rural communities face challenges, the people who live and work there are committed to maintaining their way of life.

Rural economies contribute to overall statewide economic development and quality of life, especially in the areas of agribusiness, small business and entrepreneurship, biofuels, and alternative business models. The challenge facing policy-makers is to understand the unique hurdles faced by rural areas and to formulate strategies that benefit both urban and rural areas.

Illinois has long understood the need to formulate policies to promote rural revitalization and development. Following the recession of the early 1980s, the Governor's Rural Affairs Council (GRAC) and the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs (IIRA), located at Western Illinois University, were created in 1986 to identify and coordinate public policies specifically focused on the issues challenging rural Illinois.

Governor's Rural Affairs Council

In response to the farm crisis and concern about its impact on rural counties, Governor James R. Thompson called for the establishment of the Task Force on the Future of Rural Illinois, chaired by Lieutenant Governor George H. Ryan. During the spring and summer of 1986, Lieutenant Governor Ryan and the Task Force held 22 public hearings and visited 97 small communities in 60 counties. The Task Force Report was issued by Chairman Ryan to the Governor and the General Assembly in March 1987.

On October 15, 1986, Governor Thompson issued Executive Order 6 creating the Rural Fair Share Initiative. The purpose of the Fair Share Initiative was to ensure that rural counties were receiving a fair share of state resources in the areas of infrastructure and economic development. Governor Thompson indicated that because 26 percent of Illinois residents lived in the 76 rural counties, those counties should receive at least 25 percent of state funding allocated for infrastructure and economic development. The executive order mandated that each agency report annually their funding for the 76 counties.

Also on October 15, 1986, Governor Thompson signed executive order #7 (1986) creating the Governor's Rural Affairs Council (GRAC) to implement the Rural Fair Share Initiative, maintain a rural emphasis in state government, develop a statewide policy for rural development, and assist in the coordination efforts between the Department of Commerce and Community Affairs and

the Department of Agriculture. The GRAC was to fund the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs to develop the Fair Share Annual Report.

The Council was chaired by Lieutenant Governor Ryan, and was comprised of the directors of twelve State agencies which administered major programs affecting rural Illinois. The GRAC included the Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce and Community Affairs, Department of Conservation, Department of Energy and Natural Resources, Department of Mines and Minerals, Department of Transportation, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Illinois Development Finance Authority, Illinois Farm Development Authority, Illinois Housing Development Authority, University of Illinois, and the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs.

In March of 1987, the work of the Task Force culminated when the official recommendations from the Task Force were submitted to the Governor and the General Assembly. The General Assembly went on to adopt those recommendations which included the Rural Diversification Act, and created the Office of Rural Community Development, the Center for Value-Added Agriculture, the Center for Forestry Industry Development, and the Institute for Rural Affairs at Western Illinois University.

In July 1988 the General Assembly provided funding for the first time in the state appropriation for the Rural Affairs Council. After almost two years of funding from various state agencies, an appropriation for $407,000 GRF was consolidated in the Lieutenant Governor's budget by House Amendment #1. In April 1990, Lieutenant Governor George Ryan released "Rural Revitalization: The Comprehensive State Policy for the Future". This was to be the blueprint for rural Illinois.

The Governor's Rural Affairs Council continued to function under subsequent Lieutenant Governors and was revitalized in 2011 by Governor Pat Quinn when he signed Executive Order 11-4. The purpose of the revitalized Council is "to develop and implement strategies for improving delivery of State of Illinois services to rural Illinois and to expand opportunities and enhance the quality of life for rural residents" (2011 Executive Order 11-4). At that time, the Council expanded to 18 member agencies and nonprofit organizations, and five citizen members (see list of current members on page ii).

Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs

The Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs (IIRA) at Western Illinois University was founded in 1989 as a companion agency for the Governor's Rural Affairs Council. It researches issues faced by policy-makers, presents educational programming, and provides technical assistance on economic development, education, health care, public transportation, housing, technology, and sustainability issues. IIRA works closely with the GRAC, the Lieutenant Governor's office, state agencies, and other rural institutions to increase the quality of life in rural Illinois by conducting applied research on innovative practices and solutions as well as providing outreach service to rural leaders. Executive Order 11-4 names IIRA as the "academic clearinghouse in the State of

Illinois for rural development initiatives" and further states that the GRAC and IIRA will "coordinated rural development initiatives through the Office of the Lieutenant Governor" (2001).

Annual Report

In 1991, Governor Jim Edgar signed Executive Order 13 (1991) requiring the Governor's Rural Affairs Council to produce an Annual Report on the State of the Rural Economy each year. Executive Order 13 specified that the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs at Western Illinois University organized the report on behalf of the GRAC. Executive Order 11-4 (2011) restates the requirement of IIRA and the GRAC to produce the Annual Report each year.

The State of Rural Illinois

At the time that the GRAC was created, the Office of Management and Budget classified 76 counties as rural. Over the years, as the population shifted and metropolitan areas grew, the definition has been revised several times. This report uses the 2003 definition: those counties outside a Metropolitan Statistical Area (counties linked to a city or twin cities with populations of 50,000 or more). This revised definition classifies 66 counties as rural (Figure 1).

Conditions in Rural Illinois

Population

There are 1,679,801 people — more than the population of 12 states[1] — living in the rural counties of Illinois. This number is significant; however, Illinois' rural counties have been losing population at the same time as the population of its metro counties and of the nation as a whole have been growing. Since 2000, rural Illinois has lost 3.4 percent of its population while metro counties have gained 4.9 percent (Table 1).

Much of the loss of population can be attributed to the out-migration of younger people. Nonmetro counties lost 13.9 percent of residents under the age of 18, 5.6 percent between the ages of 18 and 24, and 16.8 percent between the ages of 25 and 44 years between 2000 and 2014. During the same period, metro counties lost far fewer residents in the under the age of 18 (7.1%) and 25 to 44 year olds (7.7%) categories and gained residents between the ages of 18 to 24 (4.9%). Illinois as a whole also lost residents between the ages of 18 and 24 (7.9%) and between the ages of 25 to 44 (8.8%) while gaining population in the 18 to 24 year old demographic (3.4%).

[1] Alaska, Delaware, Hawaii, Idaho, Maine, Montana, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont, and Wyoming.

Figure 1. Metro and Nonmetro Counties in Illinois

Contrasted with this is a growth in the number of older residents in both metro and nonmetro counties. Nonmetro counties have grown more slowly, however, with gains of 16 percent of residents ages 45 to 64 and 7.8 percent in residents age 65 and older. This contrasts with a growth of 29 percent of residents aged 45 to 64 years old and 21.9 percent of residents age 65 and older in metro counties. Illinois as a whole gained in population between the ages of 45 and 64 (27%) and 65 and older (19.2%).

There are many possible reasons for the loss of young and working age residents in nonmetro areas. Certainly many young people move to metro areas to enjoy a more urban lifestyle but for many more the opportunities for better paying jobs and access to cultural amenities, shopping, and entertainment make metro areas more appealing.

Residents between the age of 45 and 64 are, for the most part, still working and may be leaving rural areas for better job opportunities and higher wages. Residents age 65 and older have retired and many are leaving rural areas to be closer to family or to reside in areas with better weather and more amenities. Others are leaving because of a lack of services including transportation, appropriate senior housing, grocery stores and pharmacies, and medical facilities in rural areas (Walzer 2001).

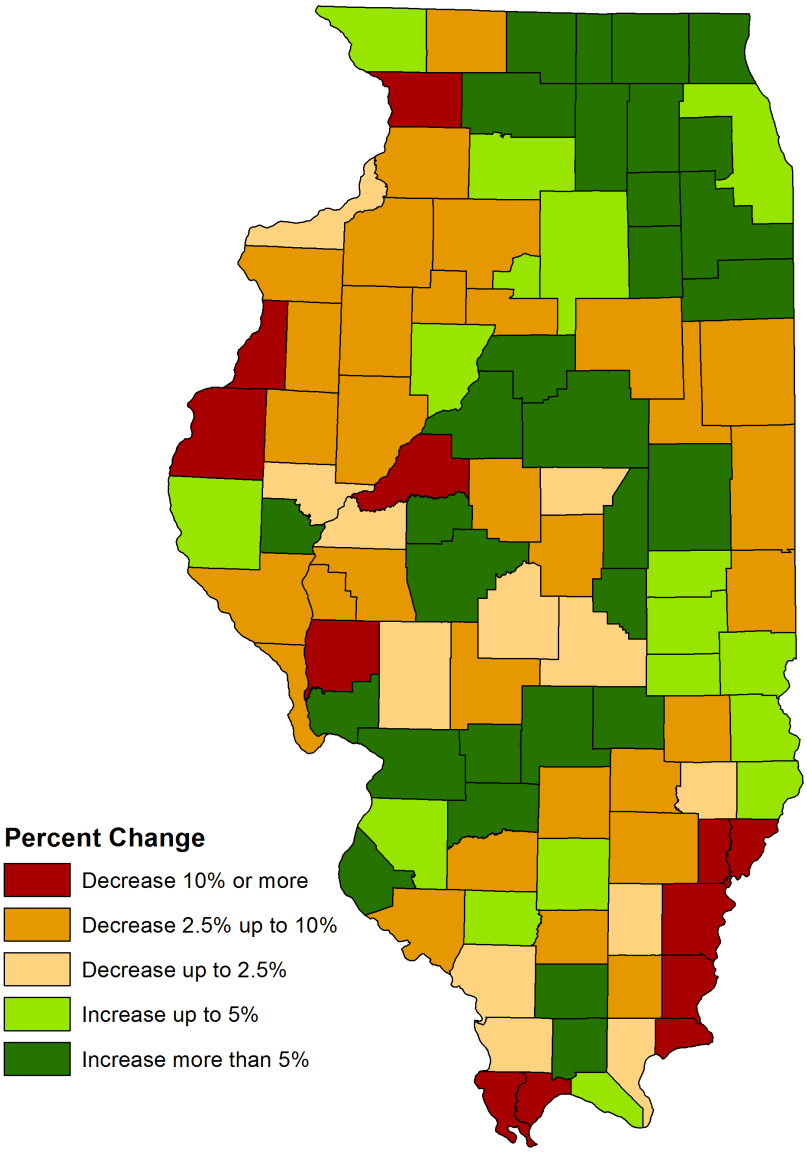
Table 1. Rural Versus Urban Demographic Change in Illinois and U.S. by Age Cohort

	Illinois			
Characteristic Year	**Nonmetro Counties**	**Metro Counties**	**Illinois**	**United States**
2000	1,705,887	10,713,406	12,419,293	281,421,906
2014	1,647,441	11,233,139	12,880,580	318,857,056
Percent Change 2000-2014	-3.4%	4.9%	3.7%	13.3%
Under 18 Years Old				
2000	405,330	2,840,121	3,245,451	72,293,812
2014	348,910	2,639,564	2,988,474	73,583,618
Percent Change 2000-2014	-13.9%	-7.1%	-7.9%	1.8%
18 to 24 Years Old				
2000	167,913	1,042,985	1,210,898	27,143,454
2014	158,556	1,093,604	1,252,160	31,464,158
Percent Change 2000-2014	-5.6%	4.9%	3.4%	15.9%
25 to 44 Years Old				
2000	463,061	3,332,483	3,795,544	85,040,251
2014	385,302	3,075,449	3,490,751	94,029,637
Percent Change 2000-2014	-16.8%	-7.7%	-8.8%	-1.2%
45 to 64 Years Old				
2000	389,360	2,278,015	2,667,375	61,952,636
2014	452,621	2,938,041	3,390,661	83,536,432
Percent Change 2000-2014	16.2%	29.0%	27.1%	34.8%
Age 65 and Older				
2000	280,223	1,219,802	1,500,025	34,991,753
2014	302,052	1,486,481	1,788,533	46,243,211
Percent Change 2000-2014	7.8%	21.9%	19.2%	32.2%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Selected Age Groups by Sex: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2014.

Rural depopulation is not a recent phenomenon in Illinois. Figure 2 shows that 45 rural counties lost population between 1990 and 2010, with 12 of those counties losing 10 percent or more of their population. Only twelve nonmetro counties lost population during this time period and 26 gained in population. Population loss was most common in counties located in the western and southern parts of the state. Population growth took place in metro counties and those areas near metro areas.

Figure 2. Population Change 1990 - 2013.



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Annual Estimates of the Resident Population: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2014. Summary Tape File 1, 1990.

It should also be noted that many of these counties have been losing population for decades. Of the 66 rural counties in Illinois, 26 hit their peak population in 1900 (Table 2). By 2010, 23 counties[2] had fewer than 15,000 residents, 13 of which had populations less than 10,000. Populations this small can make it difficult for local governments to generate revenue, maintain schools and infrastructure, and provide government services for their residents.

Table 2. Peak Population of Metro and Nonmetro Counties

Peak Year	Counties
1900	Brown, Clark, Clay, Cumberland, Edgar, Edwards, Gallatin, Greene, Hamilton, Hancock, Henderson, Iroquois, Jasper, Jo Daviess, Johnson, Livingston, Moultrie, Pike, Pope, Schuyler, Scott, Shelby, Union, Washington, Wayne, White
1910	Bureau, Crawford, Fulton, Lawrence, Wabash, Warren
1920	Cass, De Witt, Montgomery, Putnam, Saline
1930	Franklin
1940	Alexander, Fayette, Hardin, Marion, Perry, Pulaski
1950	Christian
1960	Carroll, Lee, Logan
1970	
1980	Adams, Jackson, Knox, Mason, McDonough, Morgan, Randolph, Richland, Stephenson, Whiteside
1990	
2000	Effingham, Jefferson
2010	Coles, Douglas, LaSalle, Massac, Ogle, Williamson

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division,

Employment

When people think about rural places, they may assume that agriculture is the dominant industry. While agriculture is still vitally important to the economy of rural areas and to the state as a whole, it no longer dominates rural economies in terms of employment (Table 3). The declining importance of agricultural employment is caused by the escalating use of technology on farms, which increases farm productivity and enhances the efficiency of larger farms. This in turn has reduced the total number of farms and the demand for farm workers.

According to the Bureau of the Census, only 4.6 percent of residents of nonmetro counties and 1.1 percent of all Illinois residents make their living in Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, and Mining. This is far fewer than the 25 percent of nonmetro residents that are employed in the Educational Services, and Health Care and Social Assistance jobs. More nonmetro residents make

[2] Counties with populations of less than 10,000: Alexander, Brown, Edwards, Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Henderson, Jasper, Pope, Pulaski, Putnam, Schuyler and Scott. Counties with populations between 10,000 and 15,000: Cass, Clay, Cumberland, Greene, Johnson, Mason, Moultrie, Wabash, Washington, and White.

their living in the Transportation and Warehousing, and Utilities-related industries (21.1%) and in the Manufacturing sector (14.4%). Retail trade also is a significant employer (12.4%) in non-metro counties. These employment sectors must be taken into account when developing economic policies and development strategies for rural Illinois.

Table 3. Illinois Metro and Nonmetro Employment by Sector, 2014

	Total Number of Persons Employed 16 Years and Older			Percent of Total Persons Employed 16 Years and Older		
By Industry	**Illinois**	**Illinois Metro**	**Illinois Nonmetro**	**Illinois**	**Illinois Metro**	**Illinois Nonmetro**
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	5,998,320	5,264,541	733,779	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	63,113	29,584	33,529	1.1%	0.6%	4.6%
Construction	310,368	263,763	46,605	5.2%	5.0%	6.4%
Manufacturing	756,029	650,544	105,485	12.6%	12.4%	14.4%
Wholesale trade	184,209	164,286	19,923	3.1%	3.1%	2.7%
Retail trade	655,654	565,018	90,636	10.9%	10.7%	12.4%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	348,569	304,478	44,091	19.8%	19.6%	21.1%
Information	126,311	115,157	11,154	2.1%	2.2%	1.5%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	447,732	413,020	34,712	7.5%	7.8%	4.7%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	666,163	626,205	39,958	11.1%	11.9%	5.4%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1,379,821	1,196,698	183,123	23.0%	22.7%	25.0%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	538,464	483,379	55,267	9.0%	9.2%	7.5%

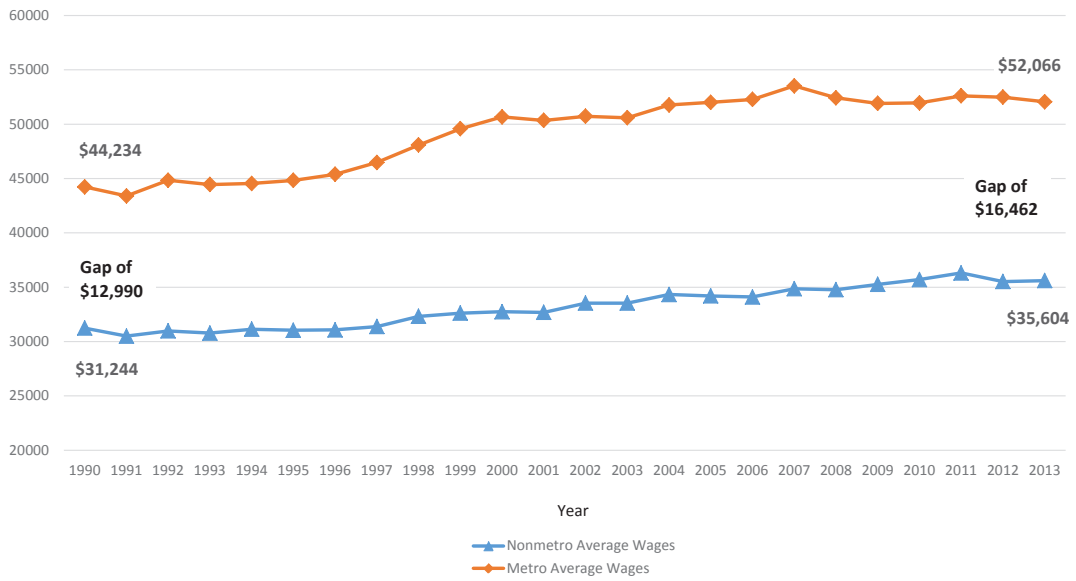
Source: **U.S. Bureau of the Census, Table DP03 Selected Economic Characteristics**

Wages and Income

Perhaps the most important factor driving rural out-migration is a widening rural versus urban wage gap (Figure 3). In 1990, workers in metro counties earned an average annual wage of $44,234 while workers in nonmetro counties earned an average annual wage of $31,244, creating a wage gap of $12,990 per year for rural workers. While the 1990 wage gap was significant, that gap has increased in subsequent years. Wages in nonmetro areas have not grown at the same rate

as those in metro counties. Workers in metro counties earned 18 percent more in 2013 ($7,832 annually) while annual average wages for nonmetro workers increased by 14 percent ($4,360 annually). This has resulted in a wider wage gap of $16,462 in 2013. Rural residents looking for higher wages and better opportunities have little choice but to move to metro areas.

Figure 3. Real Average Wage Per Job, 1990 - 2013



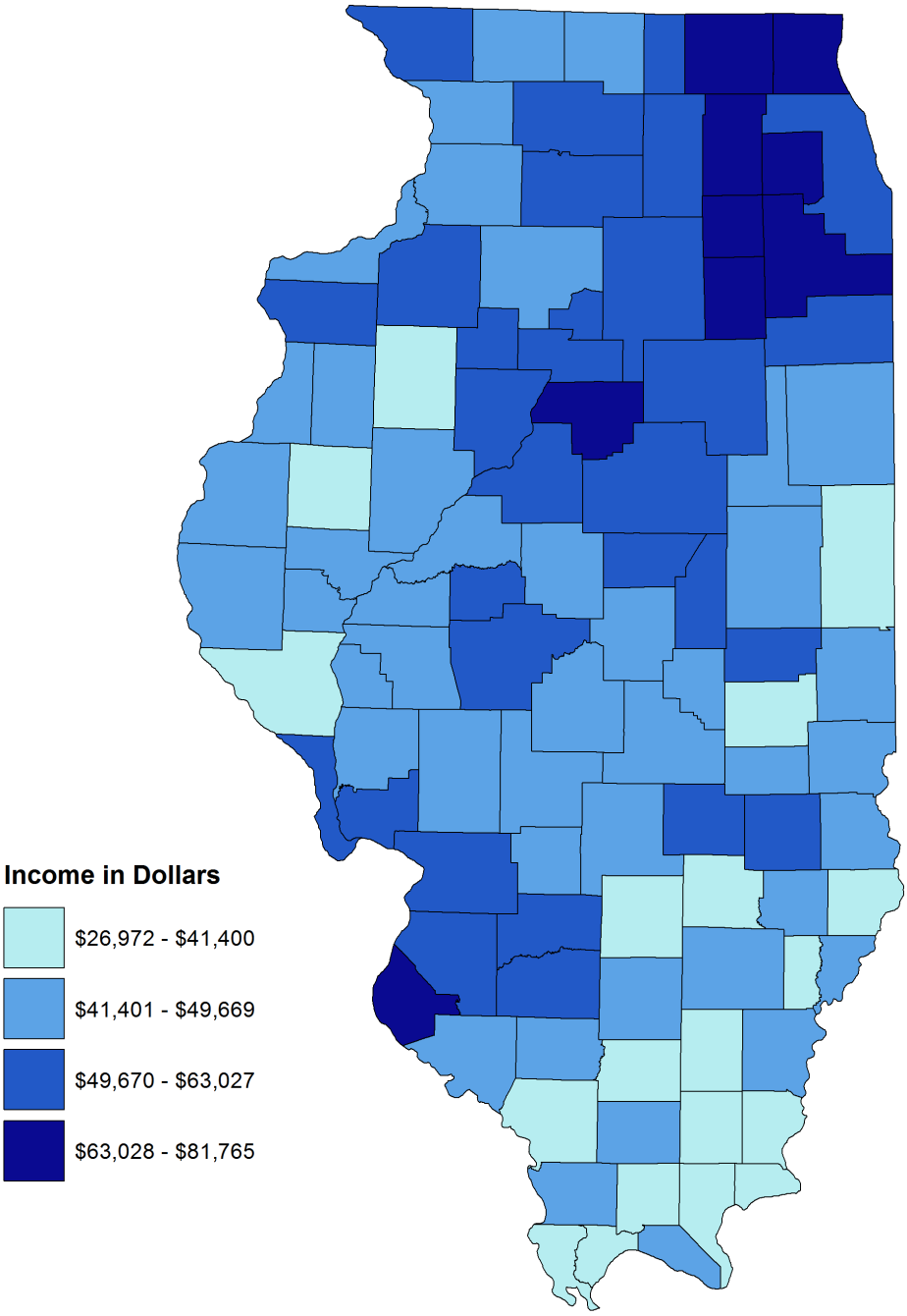
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. Summary Tape File 1, 1990, Summary File 1, 2000, Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Selected Age Groups by Sex: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2014. http://www.bea.gov/iTable/iTable.cfm?reqid=70&step=1&isuri=1&acrdn=5#reqid=70&step=1&isuri=1

This wage gap is further illustrated by examining the distribution of median household incomes throughout the state. Figure 4 shows that the residents of those counties located closer to metro centers tend to have higher household incomes. The counties with the lowest median household incomes ($26,972 - $41,400) are primarily clustered in the rural southeastern part of the state.

Unemployment

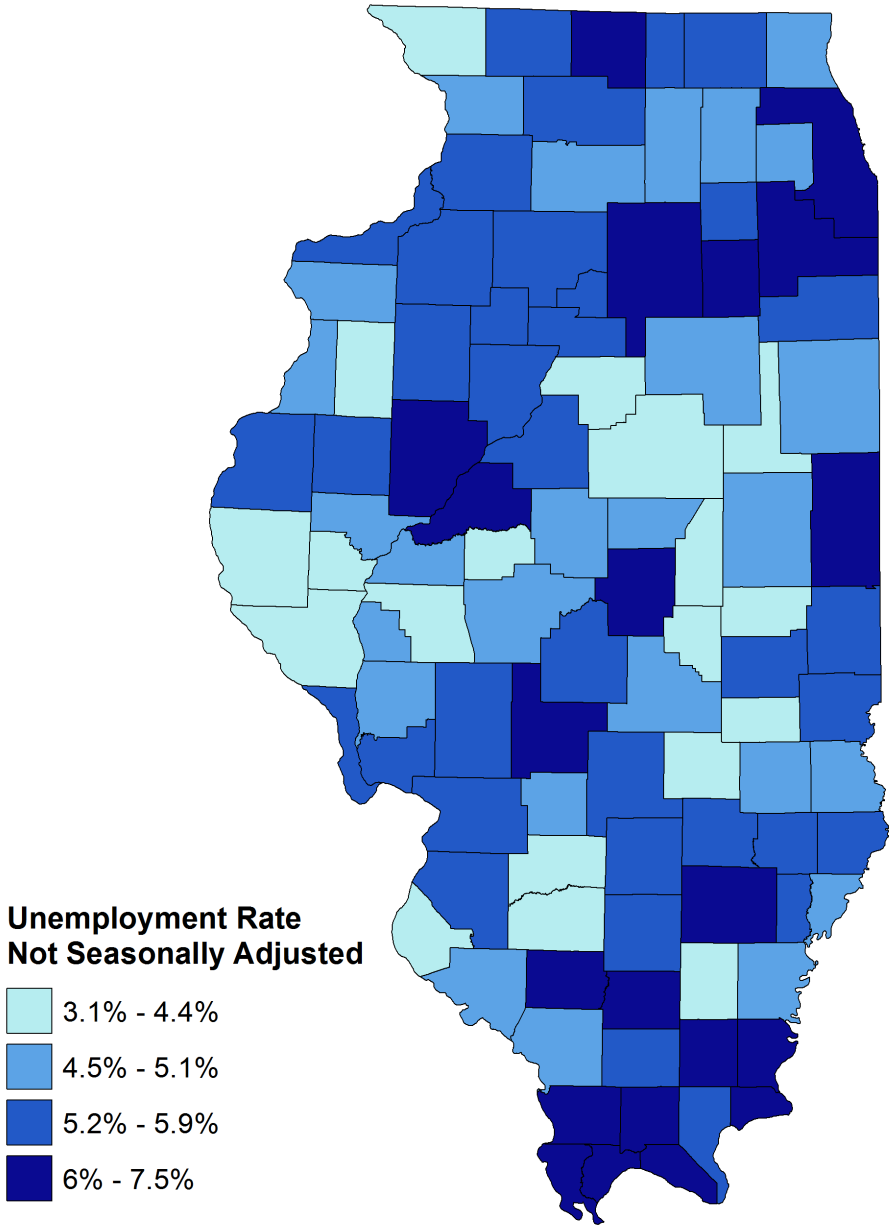
Unemployment rates have improved in the last few year and are comparable in metro and non-metro areas. Given the loss of population experienced by rural areas, this improvement in unemployment may partially be the result of unemployed workers migrating to metro areas in search of jobs. Pockets of high unemployment (6.0% and above) do exist in some rural counties, largely as a result of the loss of manufacturing jobs. Replacing jobs is essential to retaining population in rural areas but this is especially challenging in small, rural counties that lack a professional economic development staff.

Figure 4. Median Household Income, 2013



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey

Figure 5. Unemployment Rate, May 2015



Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Monthly 2015, Downloaded June 15, 2015.

GRAC Activities

The last year has been one of transition for the Governor's Rural Affairs Council as members completed work on initiatives of the last administration and worked to develop priorities for the future. Several projects were completed including the following.

2014 Illinois EMS Summit. Members of the GRAC with the support of the Lieutenant Governor's office convened the second Illinois EMS Summit. The Summit was held in response to concerns raised in hearings held by the Illinois House of Representatives' Task Force on Rural EMS that there was a lack opportunity for information sharing and collaboration in the EMS community. The day-long event held in Springfield on November 19, brought together EMS providers and other stakeholders for the purpose of examining the condition of EMS in Illinois. Participants had the opportunity to review the progress made by the EMS Task Force and the Illinois EMS Alliance and examined issues critical to the EMS community. Speakers addressed a variety of topics including mobile integrated health care, the impact of the Affordable Care Act on EMS, and medical transportation. Summit attendees also were able to earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs). Approximately 100 providers attended the 2014 Summit.

Support for 911 Services. Lieutenant Governor Sanguinetti, as Chair of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council, supported the passage of Senate Bill 096 which was signed by the Governor on June 26, 2015. Among it's provisions, this law improves the efficiency and reduces the costs of 911 services by consolidating 911 districts so that counties with small populations can combine resources when providing this vital service. The law also creates a state-level director so that there is more standardization and better coordination of services in the state.

Homegrown by Heroes. Lieutenant Governor Sanguinetti helped launch this Illinois Department of Agriculture program. The program, which started in Kentucky in 2013, is part of the Farmer Veteran Coalition, which denotes farm products grown and/or raised by veterans. Farmers, or those involved in agriculture who have served in any branch of the U.S. military, can use the Homegrown By Heroes logo on their signs or products. Participating veterans must own at least 50 percent of the agriculture-related business.

Priorities for the Future

Under the leadership of Lieutenant Governor Sanguinetti, the Governor's Rural Affairs Council reconvened on June 25, 2015. Council members discussed conditions and issues in rural Illinois and discussed the activities of their agencies. Lieutenant Governor Sanguinetti updated the Council members on her priorities. Among those priorities are the following:

Economic Development. Small, rural communities often have part-time or volunteer staff without the expertise, training, or resources necessary to conduct effective economic and community development practices. Economic development efforts are vital in these areas if they are to retain their population, especially the younger demographic. Unfortunately, these communities find

it difficult to compete with metro areas when engaged in traditional industry recruiting efforts. Rural communities should be encouraged and supported in pursuing more innovative economic development strategies such as promoting entrepreneurship and alternative business models. Small, rural communities must also pursue alternative ways to finance economic development initiatives including options like micro-lending, crowdfunding, and community foundations focused specifically on economic development.

Rural Education. A highly skilled, educated workforce is key to the economic vitality of Illinois. Unfortunately, rural schools are facing shrinking numbers of school aged children, diminishing funding and local revenues, and an aging infrastructure. At the same time that they are being asked to make greater use of technology and meet additional mandates for testing and services. School districts are looking for greater economies of scale through continued consolidations and through the use of technology to deliver instruction, but more must be done to ensure that Illinois is preparing the workforce it needs for the future.

Medical Transportation and Emergency Services. One factor driving rural out-migration is a lack of access to jobs, school, health care, shopping, recreation and entertainment. A lack of public transportation force residents to drive long distances to get to services to meet their basic needs. Those without a reliable car must depend on friends and family for rides to work, medical appointments, and other services only available in larger communities. Illinois has made great strides in coordinating public transportation at the county and regional level but non-emergency medical transportation remains an issue. Even communities or counties with public transportation may not offer services to take riders to scheduled medical appointments or treatments outside their service area. This is especially true for elderly and low income patients who may have no choice but to call an ambulance to get to dialyses treatment, chemotherapy, physical therapy, mental health counseling, etc. This ties up scarce emergency vehicles and personnel and increases the costs for patients and transportation providers. Residents that are not able to get to appointments suffer negative health consequences that often lead to conditions that are more difficult and expensive to treat.

Providing emergency medical services (EMS) continues to be challenging in rural areas. The shrinking and aging pool of EMS volunteers common to many communities is particularly problematic in rural areas. The cost and time commitment necessary for volunteers to meet initial training requirements and continuing education requirements are particularly challenging for small rural communities. Sometime government regulations like increased training requirements, although meant to improve EMS, are counterproductive for rural areas. Emergency services are a vital part of the infrastructure needed to maintain rural communities and retain population.

Rural Veterans and Agriculture Entrepreneurship. Approximately 19 percent of Illinois' veterans reside in rural areas (National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics). Agriculture offers opportunities for veterans to build businesses and pursue viable livelihoods while expanding this vital segment of the Illinois economy. Opportunities exist in traditional farming and retail; food processing and value-added agriculture, livestock, and local foods, community supported agriculture, and farmers markets.

Improving Local Capacity. As stated earlier in this report, rural communities often lack the resources available in metro areas. In many cases, these communities do not have full-time, paid professionals to plan and implement community and economic development initiatives, instead relying on part-time or volunteer staff. Programs offered by GRAC member agencies are important in supporting local leaders and communities. These include grant and loan options for infrastructure projects, economic and community development initiatives, and assistance with new business creation. Several agencies provide regulatory oversight and protect rural citizens from environmental degradation, unsafe practices, and tainted food. Other agencies promote Illinois business and agriculture. While others ensure that Illinois and its communities has the necessary infrastructure to attract and retain businesses, protect its natural resources, and maintain the quality of life of its citizens.

The Governor's Rural Affairs Council was created to be a mechanism for its members to collaborate in identifying needs that fall between the responsibilities of individual agencies' mandates. The Homegrown by Heroes program and the EMS Summit, both described earlier, are examples of this collaboration. The Council also has access to the resources at the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs to research issues, identify best practices and implement programs when gaps in services are identified.

Conclusion

Rural Illinois has made great strides forward in addressing the issues that it faces but much work remains. As the Governor's Rural Affairs Council under the leadership of Lieutenant Governor Sanguinetti moves forward, it will continue to confront the issues described in this report. Among the most important will be maintaining efforts to create and retain jobs, assisting local governments in identifying innovative and efficient practices, and enhancing the capacity of local leadership. Equally important is the GRAC's role of providing a coordinated approach among its member agencies to aid rural community economic development and facilitate access to state government services.

The most effective solutions to rural issues must begin with local leaders working with available state programs. Working together, the Governor's Rural Affairs Council and its member agencies can improve the state's response to rural issues and improve the future of rural Illinois.

References

Illinois Department of Employment Security, *Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Monthly 2015*. http://www.ides.illinois.gov/LMI/Pages/Current_Monthly_Unemployment_Rates.aspx. Downloaded June 15, 2015.

National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics. T*otal Veteran Population 18 Years and Older, by State and Geographic Component*. http://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/SpecialReports/States_by_rural_urban.pdf. Downloaded July 14, 2015.

U.S. Census Bureau. 2006 and 2010. *American Community Survey, American Fact Finder*. Table B21002, 5-year estimates, 2006-2010.

U.S. Census Bureau. 1990 and 2000. *Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Selected Age Groups by Sex: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2014*. Tape File 1, 1990, Summary File 1, 2000,

U.S. Census Bureau. Population Division. http://www.census.gov/population/www/censusdata/cencounts/index.html. Downloaded July 14, 2015.

U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Table DP03 Selected Economic Characteristics*.

U.S. Bureau of the Census. *Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Selected Age Groups by Sex: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2014*. Summary Tape File 1, 1990, Summary File 1, 2000, http://www.bea.gov/iTable/iTable.cfm?reqid=70&step=1&isuri=1&acrdn=5#reqid=70&step=1&isuri=1. Downloaded July 14, 2015.

U.S. Census Bureau. 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey.

Walzer, Norman. 2001. Population Trends in Rural Illinois. Rural Research Report 12(6) (Spring). Macomb: Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs.

Appendices

A. Executive Order Number 4 (2011)

B. Executive Order Number 13 (1991)

EXECUTIVE ORDER **11-04**

EXECUTIVE ORDER REGARDING THE GOVERNOR'S RURAL AFFAIRS COUNCIL

WHEREAS, the Governor's Rural Affairs Council was created pursuant to Executive Order Number 7 on October 15, 1986, to maintain the rural emphasis in Illinois government, strengthen the rural economy, increase the capacity and viability of local government and improve education and human service opportunities in Illinois; and

WHEREAS, these issues remain priorities of the State of Illinois in the 21st Century; and

WHEREAS, the needs of rural residents and communities vary greatly from one part of the State of Illinois to another part of the State; and

WHEREAS, the rural challenges and opportunities continue to evolve over time; and

WHEREAS, the Institute for Rural Affairs at Western Illinois University is the academic clearinghouse in the State of Illinois for rural development and initiatives; and

WHEREAS, policies and programs developed to meet the needs of rural Illinoisans are most effective when directed and coordinate by a leader at the highest level of state government; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's Rural Affairs Council and the Institute for Rural Affairs at Western Illinois University coordinate rural development initiatives through the Office of the Lieutenant Governor; and

WHEREAS, the Lieutenant Governor, as Chair of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council, has the authority to organize government and private sector resources to secure assistance and enhance the quality of life for rural Illinois; and

THEREFORE, I, Pat Quinn, Governor of Illinois, pursuant to the powers vested in me by Article V of the Constitution of Illinois, do hereby order as follows;

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council is to develop and implement strategies for improving delivery of State of Illinois services to rural Illinois and to expand opportunities and enhance the quality of life for rural residents. The Governor's Rural Affairs Council and the Institute for Rural Affairs at Western Illinois University shall continue to issue an Annual Report in accordance with Executive Order Number 13 of October 11, 1991.

II. MEMBERSHIP

a. The Lieutenant Governor shall serve as Chair of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council.
b. Members of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council shall include one representative from each of the following Illinois not-for-profit corporations: Illinois Agricultural Association and Rural Partners.
c. Members of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council shall also include one representative from each of the following governmental agencies or institutions in the State of Illinois: Illinois Department on Aging, Illinois Department of Agriculture, Illinois Department of Commerce of Economic Opportunity, Illinois Department of Employment Security, Illinois Department of Human Service, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Illinois Department of Public Health, Illinois Department of Transportation, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Illinois Community College Board, Illinois State Board of Education, University of Illinois-Cooperative Extension Service, Illinois Housing Development Authority, Southern Illinois University, Illinois for Rural Affairs at Western Illinois University, and Illinois Finance Authority.
d. The Governor shall appoint up to six citizen members to serves on the Governor's Rural Affairs Council as required to increase the Governor's Rural Affairs Council as required to increase the Governor's Rural Affairs Council memberships to a total of no more than 25 members.

III. GOVERNANCE

a. The Council shall meet as often as the Chair deems necessary.
b. The governmental agencies or institutions in the State of Illinois with representatives eligible to serve on the Governor's Rural Affairs Council shall provide information upon request to the Chair of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council concerning agency programs, data, and activities that impact rural Illinois.
c. The Chair of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council may appoint persons, including but not limited to, representatives from government, private industry, and not-for-profit organizations, to serve on committees of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council and to provide input to the Governor's Rural Affairs Council as a whole.

IV. TRANSPARENCY

In addition to whatever policies or procedures the Governor's Rural Affairs Council may adopt, all operations of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council will be subject to the provision of the Illinois Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 430/1 et seq.) and the Illinois

Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 12011 et seq.). This Section shall not be construed so as to preclude other statutes from applying to the Governor's Rural Affairs Council and its activities.

V. PRIOR EXECUTIVE ORDERS
Executive Order Number 6 of October 15, 1986, Executive Order Number 7 of October 15, 1986, Executive Order Number 13 of October 11, 1991, and Executive Order Number 1 of January 11, 2000, are each hereby amended in accordance with the provisions of this Executive Order Number 11-04.

VI. EFFECTIVE DATE
This Executive Order Number 11-04 shall become effective upon filing with the Secretary of State.

Pat Quinn
Governor

Issued by the Governor: May 18, 2011
Filed with the Secretary of State: May 18, 2011

EXECUTIVE ORDER **NUMBER 13 (1991)**

AN EXECUTIVE ORDER CREATING AN ANNUAL REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE RURAL ILLINOIS ECONOMY

WHEREAS, the Institute for Rural Affairs at Western Illinois University is the State's academic clearinghouse for rural development data and initiatives; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's Rural Affairs Council and the Institute for Rural Affairs coordinate rural development initiatives through the Office of the Lieutenant Governor; and

WHEREAS, the Lieutenant Governor as the Chairman of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council is given the authority to organize government and private sector resources to secure assistance for and to enhance the quality of life in rural Illinois; and

WHEREAS, the Institute for Rural Affairs at Western Illinois University has developed a format for an Annual Report on the State of Rural Economy and has agreed to produce this report.

THEREFORE, I, Jim Edgar, hereby order the following:

A. Executive Order Number 6 and 7 (1986) are hereby amended in accordance with the provisions of this Executive Order.
B. There is created an Annual Report on the State of the Rural Illinois Economy.
C. The Annual Report on the State of the Rural Illinois Economy shall replace the Rural Fair Share Initiative created by Executive Order Number 6 (1986).
D. The Institute for Rural Affairs at Western Illinois University shall organize the Annual Report in cooperation with the Governor's Rural Affairs Council.
E. The Annual Report on the State of the Rural Illinois Economy shall assess rural economic indicators and make recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly on rural infrastructure needs.
F. The Governor's Rural Affairs Council and the Institute for Rural Affairs Western Illinois

University shall issue the Annual Report on the State of the Rural Illinois Economy no later than August 1 of each year to the Governor and General Assembly.

G. For the purposes of the Annual Report on the State of the Rural Economy the following United States Bureau of the Census definitions as detailed in *Rural Revitalization: The Comprehensive State Policy For The Future* shall apply:

   a. Rural County — No municipality over 50,000 population. Under this definition Illinois has 76 nonmetropolitan or rural counties.
   b. Rural Area — Under 2,500 population regardless of whether they are in a Metropolitan Statistical Area or not.

This Executive Order Number 13 (1991), shall become effective upon filing with the Secretary of State.

October 11, 1991
Jim Edgar
Governor