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Gov. Pritzker Signs Legislation Prioritizing Diversity in Corporate Leadership

Tuesday, August 27, 2019 - Governor, Office of the

Chicago — Governor JB Pritzker signed legislation today that works to increase diverse voices on corporate boards across the state.

"As a result of this legislation, in the coming years, both the legislature and the public can review the gender, racial and ethnic makeup of the governance of large businesses that call Illinois home," said Governor JB Pritzker. "Better diversity among leadership leads to reduced turnover, increased growth and improved market share. That's good business, and it advances my vision of an Illinois where both businesses and working families thrive."

The new law directs publicly-traded companies headquartered in Illinois to submit an annual report to the Secretary of State's Office on the representation of female and minority board members in the company and their practices for identifying and appointing diverse leadership to their board.

The University of Illinois systems will then study the demographic makeup of boards across the state and establish a rating system for those businesses in an effort to increase diversity in corporate leadership.

Beginning in 2021, reports from corporations will report to the Secretary of State's Office by January 1 each year, and the U of I will publish its analysis by March 1 of each year.

House Bill 3394 takes effect immediately.

"I introduced this bill and feel so passionately about this issue because there's not a day that goes by that I don't think about creating a brighter future for my children," said Rep. Chris Welch (D-Hillside). "I am committed to fostering a business environment that offers the same opportunities for my son, daughter, and all women and people of color that are afforded to their peers."

"With this new law, we will be able to pinpoint the corporations who aren't diversifying," said Sen. Christopher Belt (D-Centreville). "Illinois is a very diverse state, and boards should reflect the diversity of its employees, consumers and community."