ILLINOIS SEN. ELGIE R. SIMS, JR. BILLD CLASS OF 2014

Illinois Sen. Elgie Sims serves as chair of the Criminal Law Committee and vice chair of the Judiciary Committee. After serving eight years in the Illinois House (where he was chair of the Judiciary-Criminal Committee), Sims was appointed to the Senate in January 2018 to fill a vacancy. Sims’ district includes portions of the South Side of Chicago and the city’s south suburbs.

Sims is a practicing attorney, and one of his ongoing legislative priorities is to make communities safer places to live. In 2018, he sponsored legislation that overhauled the state’s cash bail system.

Many other BILLD alumni hold leadership positions in their respective legislatures on policy and appropriations committees related to the judiciary, criminal justice and corrections.

COMMITTEE CHAIRS
- Kansas Rep. Fred Patton, class of 2016
- Minnesota Rep. John Lesch, class of 2004

COMMITTEE VICE CHAIRS
- Kansas Rep. Brad Ralph, class of 2019
- North Dakota Rep. Karla Rose Hanson, class of 2018
- Ohio Sen. Nathan Manning, class of 2017
- South Dakota Rep. Timothy Johns, class of 2014

COMMITTEE RANKING MEMBERS
- Indiana Sen. Susan Glick, class of 2011
- Iowa Sen. Kevin Kinney, class of 2015
- Iowa Rep. Mary Lynn Wolfe, class of 2011
- Iowa Rep. Wes Breckenridge, class of 2019
- Ohio Sen. Cecil Thomas, class of 2015

Q & A WITH BILLD ALUMS: WHAT HAS THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC TAUGHT YOU, OR REINFORCED TO YOU, ABOUT YOUR ROLE AND WORK AS A STATE LEGISLATOR?

“First, especially in times of crisis, people look to elected leaders for clear direction. When it comes to keeping people safe, it is important to listen to facts, not political rhetoric or games.”


“The past few months have furthered my belief that state and local governments truly have significant influence over the day-to-day lives of the people we represent, more so than even the federal government. As state legislators, we have direct input on policies and programs that people have relied on to deal with and survive during COVID, while also forming close partnerships with the locals who provide the services to citizens.”

“Two things that the COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced to me about the role and work of a state legislator are the importance of being adaptable and being willing to compromise. My biggest long-term concern is to try and not overreact to the pandemic so that we can make the best policy decisions that will address present concerns while keeping an eye on the future.”

“The pandemic has reinforced my belief that constituent service is just as important as legislative work. Certainly at the beginning of the pandemic, and even now, many constituents didn’t know who to approach for assistance. It’s our role as state legislators to help our constituents navigate the complex layers of government and identify services available to them. Constituents might not remember the bills you authored or sponsored, but they do remember who helped them when they needed it the most.”

“Rep. Tim Butler, class of 2016”