



EXCLUSIVE ONLINE OFFER

XFINITY TRIPLE PLAY
\$99 A MONTH FOR 12 MONTHS

PLUS **HBO**® FOR 3 MONTHS

\$50 PREPAID CARD

GET IT NOW

xfinity

Search Go!



CLOUT STREET

CHICAGO TRIBUNE'S LOCAL POLITICAL COVERAGE

January 12, 2011

Madigan declares legislative session a success

Like Be the first of your friends to like this.

Share |

Posted by *Monique Garcia* at 2:05 p.m.

A new crop of House lawmakers was sworn in today at the University of Illinois at Springfield, where Democratic Speaker Michael Madigan reflected on the last two years that started with lawmakers kicking a governor out of office and ended just hours ago with a historic vote to increase taxes.

"The recent session of the General Assembly was among the most controversial, among the most contentious, and yes, among the most successful," Madigan said shortly after he was formally elected to a 14th term as speaker.

He ticked off a long list of accomplishments in the last two-year session of the legislature, including moving up the primary date that "greatly helped" President Barack Obama win office, passing ethics measures in the wake of ex-Gov. Rod Blagojevich's impeachment, implementing sweeping nursing home and pension reforms as well as approving civil unions for same-sex couples and abolishing the death penalty.

But Madigan acknowledged there was more hard work ahead, including tackling education reforms, curbing workers' compensation costs and righting the state's budget ship.

"We've done a lot, but as always, we have more to do," Madigan said.

Democrats lost several seats during the November election, though they still hold a 64-54 majority over their Republican counterparts. Madigan's members credit him with ensuring Democrats did not lose control of the House despite Republican gains nationwide.

Republican leader Tom Cross of Oswego said it's "no mystery" that Illinois' lawmakers are deeply divided along political lines, but he called for bipartisanship moving forward to fix the state's budget.

"We need to realize that the solutions that we want to look at for the financial beast we are facing have to be handled in a bipartisan manner," Cross said.

Cross said there will be disagreements moving forward, but said members must always "keep our discourse both civil and respectful," particularly in light of the shooting that has left U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords in critical condition.

Posted at 02:04:09 PM in Legislature