

# News...



*From State Representative Kelly Cassidy*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

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***New Bill Would Require All Piers & Drop-Offs Along Lake Michigan To Have Public Rescue Equipment  
If passed, Illinois would be one of the first states along Lake Michigan to have this requirement***

Springfield, IL - State Rep. Kelly Cassidy has introduced HB4165, which would require that any owner of a pier or drop-off location with clear access to Lake Michigan shall install public rescue equipment. This bill has got through its first hurdle by unanimously passing out of the Human Services Committee today. Ring life buoys and other types of safety equipment have not always been publicly available in situations where someone drowning along the shore could have been provided help. 53 people drowned in Lake Michigan in 2020 alone which made it the deadliest year on record according to The Great Lakes Surf Rescue Project which analyzes drowning data. There have been over 430 Lake Michigan drownings since 2010. With the passage of this bill, many of the potential preventable Lake Michigan drowning deaths could be avoided.

“That this bill is needed is a tragedy, but it also represents what happens when a community comes together to solve a problem.,” **said Rep. Kelly Cassidy, lead sponsor of HB4165.** “I am grateful that the Chicago Park District has joined us in support of this bill and endlessly grateful to the amazing neighbors who forced the district to change their position by installing life rings repeatedly to protect our neighbors.”

Having publicly accessible water safety equipment along parts of the Lake Michigan shoreline is the bare minimum that communities deserve to have to limit the risk of drowning. As such, by providing publicly available safety equipment like life rings we can truly begin setting up a shoreline safety system that meets the needs of our populations but also for future enhanced ways of proactive safety measures to finally become a practical reality.

“Our lakefront is really the crown jewel of our city, but until now we weren’t taking the necessary steps to ensure our residents can enjoy it safely,” **said Maria Hadden, Chicago’s 49th Ward Alderperson,** “The lake is more powerful than folks expect and if this law can prevent just one tragic drowning death, the work will be worthwhile.”

If passed, Illinois would be one of the first states (if not the first) in requiring that places with public access points along Lake Michigan have safety equipment people can use to save or offer assistance while authorities are on their way.