

ILLINOIS

Illinois voters will elect a governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, secretary of state, comptroller, and state treasurer in 2026. Thirty-nine (39) of the 59 seats in the Illinois State Senate and all 118 seats in the Illinois House of Representatives are up for election. Democrats currently hold a strong advantage in both the executive and legislative branches and are expected to maintain control of state government following the 2026 elections.

Governor

Republican Nominee

Darren Bailey

Darren Bailey is repeating his 2022 challenge of Governor JB Pritzker (D). He is a farmer and small business owner. Raised in Louisville, he earned an associate degree in agricultural production from Lake Land College before building a family farming operation with his wife, Cindy.

Bailey first entered public service on his local school board before winning election to the Illinois House in 2018 and the Illinois Senate in 2020. During his time in the legislature, he advocated for **lower taxes**, **greater local control**, support for **law enforcement**, and expanded **parental involvement in education**.

Bailey's campaign [platform](#) focuses on education, public safety, affordability, and property tax relief.

He argues that every child deserves access to a high-quality **education** and supports giving parents greater control over their children's schooling while reducing bureaucracy for local schools. Bailey also pledges strong support for **law enforcement**, tougher responses to violent crime, and policies aimed at holding repeat offenders accountable.

Economically, Bailey centers his message on lowering taxes, reducing government spending, and making Illinois more affordable for families and businesses. A major component of his agenda is property tax reform, which he says is necessary to prevent homeowners from being "taxed out" of their homes.

The Cook Political Report rates the governor's race as Solid Democratic, and Larry Sabato's Crystal Ball rates the race as Safe Democratic.

Trivia: Bailey and his wife founded and operate a private Christian school in their community, in addition to running their family farm.

