

# SB2178



## 96TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### State of Illinois

2009 and 2010

SB2178

Introduced 2/20/2009, by Sen. Michael Noland

#### SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

New Act

Creates the Illinois Plain Language Task Force Act. Provides that a Task Force chaired by the Lieutenant Governor or his or her designee shall conduct a study on, and propose legislative measures designed to realize, the potential benefits of incorporating plain language in State government documents, statutes, and contracts into which the State enters and how plain language principles might be incorporated into the statutes governing contracts among private parties so as to provide additional protections to Illinois consumers, to reduce litigation between private parties over the meaning of contractual terms, and to foster judicial economy. Contains provisions regarding the term "plain language", the composition and duties of the Task Force, and the guidelines the Task Force will follow. Effective immediately.

LRB096 02930 KTG 12944 b

FISCAL NOTE ACT  
MAY APPLY

A BILL FOR

1 AN ACT concerning plain language.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**  
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the  
5 Illinois Plain Language Task Force Act.

6 Section 5. Purpose. The mission of the Illinois Plain  
7 Language Task Force is to conduct a study on, and to propose  
8 legislative measures designed to realize:

9 (1) the potential benefits of incorporating plain  
10 language in State government documents, statutes, and  
11 contracts into which the State enters; and

12 (2) how plain language principles might be  
13 incorporated into the statutes governing contracts among  
14 private parties so as to provide additional protections to  
15 Illinois consumers, to reduce litigation between private  
16 parties over the meaning of contractual terms, and to  
17 foster judicial economy.

18 Section 10. Definition. As used in this Act:

19 "Plain language" has the same meaning ascribed to it in the  
20 Executive Memorandum of the President of the United States,  
21 mandating that Federal Agencies and Federal Administrative  
22 Rules employ plain language, issued June 1, 1998, namely that

1 "plain language" documents have logical organization,  
2 easy-to-read design features, and use: (i) common, everyday  
3 words, except for necessary technical terms; (ii) "you" and  
4 other pronouns; (iii) the active voice; and (iv) short  
5 sentences.

6 Section 15. Task Force.

7 (a) The Illinois Plain Language Task Force is hereby  
8 created. The Illinois Plain Language Task Force shall be  
9 chaired by the Lieutenant Governor or his or her designee and  
10 shall consist of the following members: one member appointed by  
11 the Illinois Attorney General; one member appointed by the  
12 Senate President; one member appointed by the Minority Leader  
13 of the Senate; one member appointed by the Speaker of the  
14 House; one member appointed by the Minority Leader of the  
15 House; and 3 members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor, one  
16 of whom represents the interests of the banking industry, one  
17 of whom represents the interests of the business community, and  
18 one of whom represents the interests of the consumers.

19 (b) Members of the Task Force must be appointed no later  
20 than 90 days after the effective date of this Act.

21 (c) If a vacancy occurs on the Task Force, it shall be  
22 filled according to the guidelines of the initial appointment.

23 (d) At the discretion of the chair, additional individuals  
24 may participate as non-voting members in the meetings of the  
25 Task Force.

1           (e) Members of the Illinois Plain Language Task Force shall  
2           serve without compensation. The Office of the Lieutenant  
3           Governor shall provide staff and administrative services to the  
4           Task Force.

5           Section 20. Duties. Once all members have been appointed,  
6           the Task Force shall meet not less than once each quarter  
7           following the effective date of this Act to carry out the  
8           duties prescribed in this Act. An initial report delineating  
9           the Task Force's findings, conclusions, and recommendations  
10          shall be submitted to the Illinois General Assembly no later  
11          than 9 months after the effective date of this Act. Thereafter,  
12          the Task Force shall make periodic recommendations on its own  
13          motion or at the urging of the Illinois General Assembly.

14          Section 25. Guidance. The Task Force shall be guided in its  
15          discussions on the subject of plain language by the guidelines  
16          for plain language drafting promulgated by the President of the  
17          United States on June 1, 1998, which accompanied his plain  
18          language Executive Memorandum issued on the same day.

19          Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon  
20          becoming law.