

Illinois State Flag

Illinois has had two official state flags. The first was officially adopted on July 6, 1915, after a vigorous campaign by Mrs. Ella Park Lawrence, State Regent of the Daughters of the American Revolution (D.A.R). Early in 1912, Mrs. Lawrence began visiting local D.A.R. chapters throughout Illinois seeking cooperation in promoting selection of an official state banner to place in the Continental Memorial Hall in Washington, D.C. A prize of \$25 was offered to the Chapter submitting the best design for the banner and four judges were selected to choose the winner. Thirty-five designs were submitted and the Rockford Chapter entry designed by Miss Lucy Derwent, was chosen.

State Senator Raymond D. Meeker introduced the bill which was to legalize the flag. The measure passed both Houses of the General Assembly and automatically became a law on July 6, 1915, when Governor Edward F. Dunne failed to affix his signature to the bill. The move to design a new state flag was initiated by Chief Petty Officer Bruce McDaniel of Waverly, then serving in Vietnam. The Illinois flag was one of many state flags which were hung on the walls of his mess hall; its identity was always questioned, so McDaniel requested that the flag carry the state's name.

A bill to amend the original flag act of 1915 was sponsored by Representative Jack Walker of Lansing and was passed by the General Assembly and approved by Governor Richard B. Ogilvie on September 17, 1969. This authorized a new flag to carry the word "Illinois." Governor Ogilvie appointed a committee consisting of the State Historian, the Director of the Illinois Information Service, and the State Records Archivist to develop specifications for the new state flag to ensure uniformity in reproduction of design and color by flag makers.

Mrs. Sanford Hutchison of Greenfield who had previously done extensive research on the official design of the state seal, submitted a flag which contained all the required elements of the design as specified by law, this was accepted by the committee, the Secretary of State and the Governor; on July 1, 1970, it became the official flag of Illinois.

