

# Gubernatorial candidate Kennedy makes stop in Glenview

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Despite his deep and distinguished roots on the East Coast, Chris Kennedy set out for Decatur, Ill., after college. He said he wanted to help feed America, and getting a job with food processing giant Archer Daniels Midland was the best way to learn the industry.

Three decades later, Kennedy's own roots in the Land of Lincoln are inextricable. He has served as the president of the Merchandise Mart, the chairman of the board at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and the co-founder of local nonprofit Top Box Foods.

Now, Kennedy is seeking election to the state's highest office. The eighth child of Robert and Ethel Kennedy made an appear-

ance at the Glenview Park Center on Wednesday, Feb. 7, to talk about his campaign as a Democratic candidate for governor.

After introducing himself and recounting his unusual path to the gubernatorial race, the Kenilworth resident fielded several questions from the nearly 50 people in attendance. While he addressed a variety of issues facing Illinoisans, Kennedy repeatedly circled back to the main themes of his campaign: education and tax reform.

Kennedy said that improving primary and higher education will mitigate many of the state's persisting social problems, from the exodus of young residents to violence and homelessness in Chicago.

"Everything relates back to education. If you don't

educate people, then you have to have this enormous range of plans and programs," Kennedy said. "It's like putting your finger in a dike that's popping new holes ever minute. We could fix it all if we just gave our kids great education."

The candidate also said that Illinois must invest more in public universities and vocational colleges to keep recent high-school graduates from leaving the state. Currently, Illinois has the second highest emigration of any state, according to 2017 Illinois Board of Education study.

"When I graduated from high school and college, my friends and I moved to where the jobs were. That's not the way the economy works anymore. Today,

the jobs move to where the highly educated young people are," Kennedy said. "If we give the world highly educated young people, the world will give us its jobs."

Besides inadequate education spending, Kennedy traces many of Illinois' chronic issues back to the state's revenue model. Like his Democratic opponents, State Sen. Daniel Biss (D-Evanston) and businessman J.B. Pritzker,

Kennedy supports a graduated income tax, which would require high-wage earners to pay a higher percentage of their income to the state than middle- and working-class Illinoisans.

One audience member noted that enacting a progressive tax would necessitate an amendment to the



Gubernatorial candidate Chris Kennedy mingles with the crowd after his event on Wednesday, Feb. 7, at Glenview Park Center. JEREMY TURLEY/22ND CENTURY MEDIA

state constitution. Kennedy said he would be willing to "open up the constitution," but in the short-term, he favors a plan that would give the vast majority of wage earners tax credits, while targeting wealthier individuals with higher rates.

Kennedy also trumpeted his proposal to ban legislators from serving as property tax appeals lawyers during their time in the

statehouse.

Lawmakers in Illinois may hold other jobs, and Kennedy believes that several representatives are using their positions to manipulate the oft-maligned state property tax system.

The Democratic primary election will be held March 20.

Full story at [GlenviewLantern.com](http://GlenviewLantern.com).



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