

Illinois' current state flag has remained unchanged for over a century, but in 2023 Governor J.B. Pritzker paved the way for a new banner for the Land of Lincoln. Senate Bill 1818, appropriately named after the year Illinois became a state, created a commission to evaluate the state's current flag and decide whether or not it was time to design a new one.

Illinois' first state flag was adopted in 1915 and looked similar to today's banner. It simply used the Great Seal of the State of Illinois, which pictures a bald eagle holding a banner that reads "State Sovereignty, National Union." It was modeled after the Great Seal of the United States. The dates "1818" and "1868" on the seal represent the year Illinois was established as a state and the year that the state's seal was redesigned. The original flag had a minor change in 1969, with the word "Illinois" added to the bottom.

Why Design a New Flag?

State Senator Doris Turner, who sponsored Senate Bill 1818, hopes that designing a new flag will inspire renewed civic pride among the state's residents. "We need to ensure government is evolving with the times, so people are engaged and part of what is going on across this state," she said. She also cited the diverse makeup of the state, including a large metropolis like Chicago and communities both large and small that are an economic engine for the Midwest. "Illinois is a diverse state made up of rural, urban, and suburban communities, and is known for its agriculture, strong workforce, home of Abraham Lincoln and more." "Our flag does not show that. It is time we have a flag that truly represents our state."

EXERCISE: DESIGN THE NEXT ILLINOIS STATE FLAG

Design your flag based on the information above and your creativity. Researching other state flags may give you inspiration for a new Illinois flag. Submit your idea to your state representatives in the Illinois General Assembly. Please draw your design on a separate paper if you need more space.

Good Flag Design Ideas

1. **Keep it simple** — Create a design that anyone can draw from memory.
2. **Use meaningful symbolism** — Images, colors should relate to symbols.
3. **Be distinctive** — What would make Illinois' flag stand out?

Current Illinois State Flag



Other State Flags for Inspiration



California



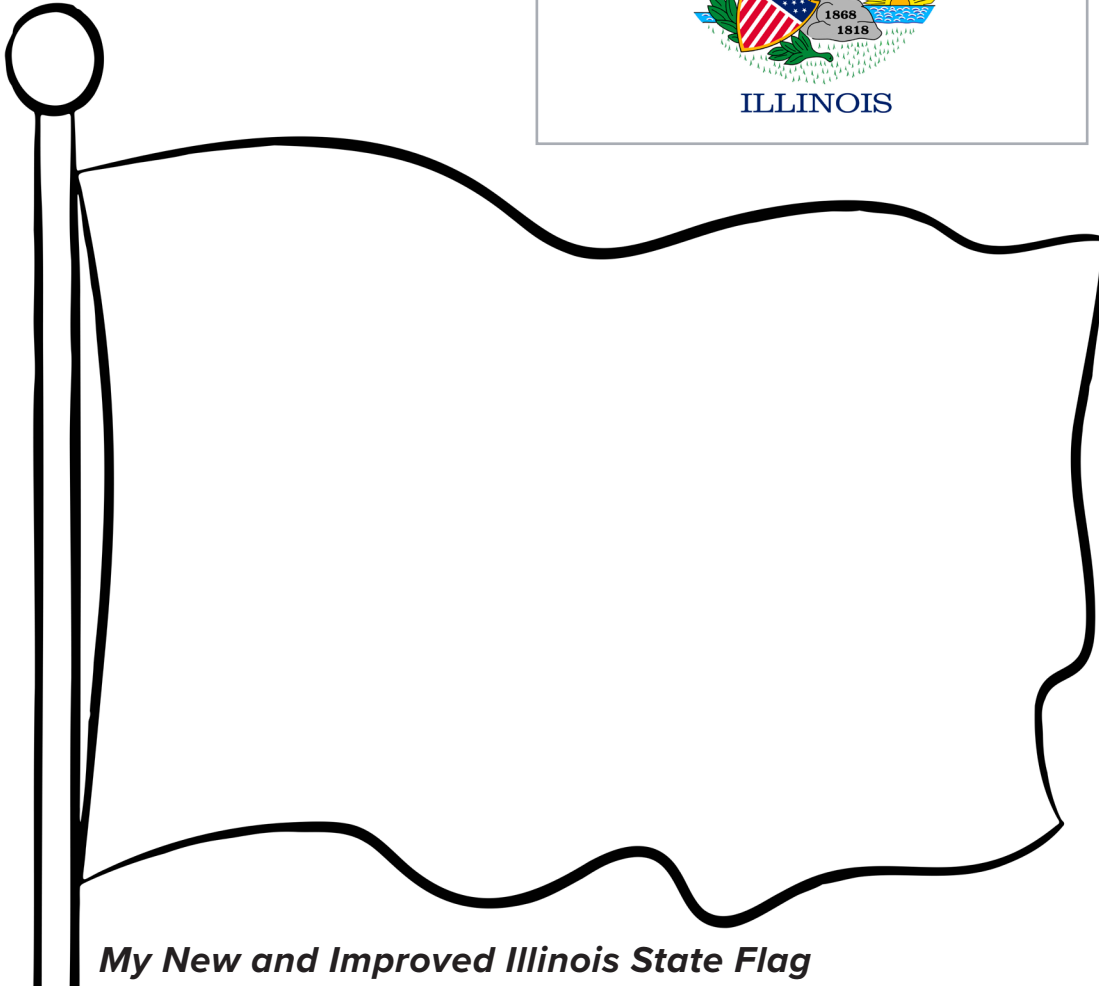
Colorado



Tennessee



Washington



My New and Improved Illinois State Flag