

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 21, 2025

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:
Rachel Romines (217) 321-3024 or rromines@ilbigi.org

Big I Illinois Presents Prestigious Cartwright Award to Tom Ross

Springfield, IL. (October 2025) – Big I Illinois presented the prestigious Charles M. Cartwright Award to Tom Ross, recently retired Big I Illinois staff member, during the association’s annual convention in Peoria, IL earlier this month. Ross was presented with the award in recognition of his role as a longtime industry and association leader.

Named for Charles Cartwright, editor of the *National Underwriter* for more than 50 years and champion of associations and the insurance industry, the award recipient is nominated by the past three recipients and the award is presented at discretion of the Big I Illinois Executive committee to the person who has performed the most meritorious service to the insurance industry in Illinois. The award is only given in those years when the committee feels there is a deserving recipient. Ross becomes the 14th recipient in the award’s history who has never served as president of the association.

Ross’s career in the insurance industry spans nearly 40 years, beginning in his family’s agency. Over the decades, he has been a tireless advocate for the independent agency system and a dedicated volunteer within Big I Illinois. He has served the association as Regional Director, InsurPac Chair, and Secretary/Treasurer, and was instrumental in developing and supporting the Chicagoland Board.

A longtime supporter of the Trusted Choice branding initiative, Ross has also been an outspoken advocate for both state and national political action committees. Within the local association community, he has filled nearly every leadership role in the DuPage Association, including Secretary, President, and Past President. He also served as Secretary of the 1752 Club and has been an active member of the Professional Liability Underwriting Society (PLUS).

Ross becomes the fourth Big I Illinois staff member to receive the Cartwright Award. Known for his mentorship and generosity, he has inspired countless agents, carrier partners, and volunteers throughout the state.

“Tom’s influence reaches far beyond titles or positions,” said Phil Lackman, Big I Illinois CEO. “He has built a legacy of connection, service, and leadership that continues to strengthen our association and the independent agency community across Illinois.”

Big I Illinois is an association representing independent insurance agents throughout the state. Big I Illinois membership is comprised of 800 insurance agencies representing 10,000 licensed independent agents engaged in all facets of the insurance industry, including property, casualty, life, and health. Its members offer customers a choice of policies from a variety of insurance companies. In addition to serving the professional needs of members, Big I Illinois works for the betterment of the insurance industry through legislative and consumer awareness programs. For more information, visit www.ilbigi.org.

###