



Legislative Report

By Taylor Anderson

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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY adjourned the spring session on May 31st without sending a budget to the Governor. This marks the third year in a row that the month of May has ended with no budget for the State of Illinois.

The Grand Bargain, which at the start of the year was a bipartisan, Senate-driven package of 14 bills, fell apart and instead were passed as separate, stand-alone bills. With no bipartisan support, the bills passed out of the Senate with only Democratic members voting yes and only a few were even called for a vote once they reached the House.

Similar to last year, the lack of a budget means there is currently no K-12 education funding and is expected to be a major pressure point for passage of at least a Stop Gap Budget of some sort. However, to this point the Governor has indicated he will not sign anything short of a full year budget that includes his necessary agenda items, which is a change from his stances in previous years.


The price of inaction is a steep one as the effects continue to impact the state and place Illinois on a dangerous path. At the time of this article, Illinois has a backlog of unpaid bills of \$15,153,309,348 growing at a pace of about \$11 million a day, according to the Comptroller's numbers. This level of growth places the state's debt at nearly half of the revenue Illinois currently generates annually.

The House held budget hearings in early June to highlight and study the effects of the Budget impasse on several areas of the State. Both the House and Senate had been planning to schedule days to return to Springfield before the end of June to attempt to pass a budget however, the Governor has called Special Session days,

beginning on June 21st and lasting until June 30th.

In conjunction with the call for Special Session, the GOP introduced a series of budget bills in both the House and Senate that have received the Governor's blessings. The Senate bills contain the appropriation language which forms the budget, the House bills contain the Governor's reforms:

- **SB 2214, SB 2215, SB 2216, SB 2217** – Note (The GOP have not yet introduced a tax increase bill to fund the proposed budget)
- **House Bill 4064** – Pension Consideration
- **House Bill 4065** – Pension Shift
- **House Bill 4066** – 4 Year Property Tax Freeze- requires signatures from 5% of votes cast in last election to initiate referendum to either reduce the aggregate extension or to extend freeze for an additional 4 years.
- **House Bill 4067** – Citizens Empowerment-Local Gov't Consolidation- requires signatures from 5% of votes cast in last election to initiate referendum to consolidate or dissolve any unit of local government.
- **House Bill 4068** – Worker's Compensation
- **House Bill 4069** – Education Funding Reform

Any action taken this summer on any township-related bills will be reported in the next issue. 

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