



Laborers' International Union of North America

Midwest Regional Office

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Illinois Legislative Update

April 3, 2015

The Illinois legislature is in the middle of a two-week break. Please use this time to contact your members and ask them to call their state representatives and senators and demand that they oppose Bruce Rauner's Turnaround Agenda.

Rauner's "Turnaround Agenda" Turns its Back on Illinois Workers

Gov. Bruce Rauner (R) never provided details about his agenda during last fall's campaign and he's been equally evasive since taking office. What's been clear since he moved into the Governor's Mansion is that Rauner feels that nearly everything that ails the State of Illinois can be cured by weakening unions and gutting workers' rights and protections.

Details of Rauner's "Turnaround Agenda" came to light recently in the form of a resolution he asked mayors and village presidents to adopt; he's clearly asking them to turn their backs on Illinois workers and unions. What follows is taken word-for-word from Rauner's "Resolution in Support of the 'Turnaround Agenda' for Local Government Empowerment and Reform":

"Whereas, local control of bargaining would allow voters or local governments to determine if certain topics should be excluded from collective bargaining, including contracting, wages, provisions of health insurance, use of employee time, required levels of staffing, procedures and criteria for personnel evaluations; and...

"Whereas, repealing the Illinois Prevailing Wage Law and the requirements for Project Labor Agreements would allow local governments more control over construction and project costs; and...

"Whereas, voters in our community should be allowed to decide via referendum whether or not employees should be forced to join a union or pay dues as a condition of employment..."

Two suburban Chicago communities brought up Rauner's resolution this week. The Village of Oswego's town meeting this week was flooded with union members and **Cong. Bill Foster (D-11, Batavia)**. Foster clearly summed up the point that everything Rauner is seeking cannot be done at the local level and in some cases, such as creation of local Right to Work (for Less) zones, they cannot be enacted at the state level.

"These are state issues, these are federal issues," Foster said, "and communities cannot opt out of these laws any more than they can opt out of civil rights laws or similar things."

Rauner Claims to Want to Increase Infrastructure Spending... Then Steals \$350 million from Road Budget

Last week, Rauner struck a deal with the legislature on **HB 318**, raiding the Road Fund and numerous other funds that support specific purposes of \$1.3 billion to fill a \$1.6 billion hole in the state budget. The biggest source of fill – \$350 million – came from the state's Road Fund. The balance was filled by making \$300 million in budget cuts.

The state's budget office claimed that the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) can afford the "sweep" of money from the Road Fund without cutting projects... for a year. Obviously, a cut of any size from the Road Budget is going to reduce how much IDOT can spend and, ultimately, cost Laborers and others good paying thousands of good paying jobs.

All House and Senate Republicans supported Rauner's raid, as did numerous Democrats. The only downstate Democrats to support the bill were **State Reps. John Bradley (D-Marion), Jehan Gordon-Booth (D-Peoria), and Frank Mautino (D-Spring Valley)**.

The budget hole was created by the rollback of the state income tax from 5% to 3.75% in January. It is clear that the state does not raise enough revenue to take care of its needs. If we want to avoid similar Road Fund raids in the future, Illinois is going to need to pass a significant increase in revenue to support other critical state services, like education and health care.

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Feel the Power

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