

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

Speaker Madigan: "Ladies and Gentlemen, we're now prepared to proceed to the Special Session called by the Governor. Special Session of the House will come to order. The Members will be in their chairs. We ask the Members to turn off their computers, their cell phones and pagers. We ask our guests in the gallery to stand and join us for the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance. This is going to be a very holy day because for the second time Rabbi Elliot Mathias will lead us in prayer."

Rabbi Mathias: "Almighty God, may the Members of this prestigious Body, the Illinois House of Representatives, convene here in the spirit of the universal code of ethics set forth by You for all mankind. Please grant strength and fortitude to all those who protect, preserve and help further the noble ideals so essential to the dignity of the human spirit. Please help fulfill speedily in our days our eternal hope and desire for a world filled with peace and tranquility, devoid of war, hatred and strife. Grant those assembled here today to be aware of Your presence and conduct their deliberations accordingly. Bless them with good health, wisdom, compassion and good fellowship. Every Friday night on the Jewish Sabbath I bless my four children with the blessing that Moses and Aaron blessed those who journey toward the promise land. I offer the same blessing to you on your journey to do the sacred work of representing and leading the citizens of Illinois. May God bless you and watch over you. May God's face shine upon you and be gracious to you. May God's presence shine upon you and grant you peace. God bless this hallowed Body. God

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

    bless our troops who stand in defense of this great land.  
    And God bless the United States of America."

Speaker Madigan: "We shall be led in the Pledge of Allegiance  
    by Representative Mathias."

Mathias - et al: "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United  
    States of America and to the republic for which it stands,  
    one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice  
    for all."

Speaker Madigan: "Roll Call for Attendance. Representative  
    Currie."

Currie: "Thank you, Speaker. Please let the record show that  
    Representatives Farnham, Feigenholtz, Jakobsson and Mell  
    are excused today."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Bost."

Bost: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let the record reflect that  
    Representatives Sosnowski, Tryon and Pihos are excused on  
    the Republican side of the aisle."

Speaker Madigan: "Thank you, Mr. Bost. Mr.. Mr. Clerk, take the  
    record. There being 110 Members answering the Attendance  
    Roll Call, there is a quorum of the House present. Mr.  
    Clerk, please read the Governor's proclamation."

Clerk Hollman: "Governor's proclamation.

WHEREAS, on January 10, 2011, I took the Constitutional oath  
    of office to become Governor of the State of Illinois,  
    solemnly swearing to uphold both the Illinois Constitution  
    and the Constitution of the United States, and promising to  
    "faithfully discharge the duties of the office of Governor  
    to the best of my abilities"; and

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

WHEREAS, I am committed to fulfilling my oath of office to serve the people of the State of Illinois by ensuring that government operates responsibly, and restoring fiscal stability to the State; and

WHEREAS, the State is currently facing an unprecedented pension crisis that, unchecked, compromises the State's credit rating and threatens the continued delivery of vital programs and services including education, public safety and human services; and

WHEREAS, the current unfunded pension liability of more than \$83 billion is unsustainable and costs taxpayers millions of dollars every day it goes unaddressed; and

WHEREAS, the State's fiscal year 2013 budget is \$33.7 billion, approximately 15 percent of which will go toward pensions alone; and

WHEREAS, on April 20, 2012, I proposed a Public Pension Stabilization Plan that would have eliminated the unfunded liability to secure 100 percent actuarial funding of the pension systems by 2042; and

WHEREAS, I have continued work with the leaders of all four legislative caucuses to introduce legislation that would eliminate the State's unfunded pension liability; stabilize and strengthen the pension system and ensure that the public employees who have faithfully contributed to the system receive benefits; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of Illinois taxpayers that measures to strengthen and reform the State's pension systems be adopted and implemented without further delay; and

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

WHEREAS, Article IV, Section 5(b) of the Illinois Constitution empowers the Governor, as Chief Executive, to convene special session of the General Assembly;

THEREFORE, pursuant to Article IV, Section 5(b) of the Illinois Constitution of 1970, I, Governor Pat Quinn, hereby call and convene the 97th General Assembly in a special session to commence on August 17, 2012, at 1:00 p.m., for the purpose of considering any legislation, new or pending, which addresses pension reform."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Bost."

Bost: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Republicans request an immediate caucus."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Bost, do you think that we could fulfill the procedural requirements of the Special Session? Do you think we could fulfill the procedural requirements..."

Bost: "Yeah. That'd be..."

Speaker Madigan: "...of the Special Session? Thank you. Mr. Clerk, Special Session House Resolution #1 and Special Session House Resolution #2 are offered by Representative Currie. Excuse me, Mr. Clerk, you were supposed to say that. Do you want to say it?"

Clerk Hollman: "Special Session House Resolution #1 and Special Session House Resolution #2 are offered by Representative Currie."

Speaker Madigan: "All right. The Chair recognizes Representative Currie."

Currie: "Thank you, Speaker. I move for the immediate... for the suspension of all applicable rules so that we can give

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

immediate consideration to Special Session House Resolutions 1 and 2."

Speaker Madigan: "You've all heard the Lady's Motion. Those in favor signify by saying 'aye'; those opposed say 'no'. The 'ayes' have it. And the Motion is adopted. Mr. Clerk, please read Special Session House Resolutions #1 and 2."

Clerk Hollman: "Special Session House Resolution #1.

RESOLVED, that the Rules of the House of Representatives of the Ninety-Seventh General Assembly be adopted as the Rules of this First Special Session, so far as the same may be applicable, and that the Committees of the House of Representatives of the Ninety-Seventh General Assembly, and their membership, shall constitute the Committees of the House during this First Special Session.

First Special Session House Resolution #2.

RESOLVED, that the Clerk inform the Senate that a majority of the House of Representatives has assembled, pursuant to the proclamation of the Governor, convening a First Special Session of the General Assembly, and are now ready for the transaction of business."

Speaker Madigan: "The House Majority Leader Representative Currie moves for the adoption of the Special Session Resolutions 1 and 2. Those in favor say 'aye'; those opposed say 'no'. The 'ayes' have it. And the Resolutions are adopted. Mr. Clerk, read the Adjournment Resolution."

Clerk Hollman: "Special Session House Joint Resolution #1.

RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETY-SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, AT THE FIRST SPECIAL SESSION THEREOF, THE SENATE CONCURRING

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

HEREIN, that when the two houses adjourn on Friday, August 17, 2012, the House of Representatives stands adjourned until the call of the Speaker; and the Senate stands adjourned until the call of the President."

Speaker Madigan: "Representative Currie moves for the adoption of Special Session House Joint Resolution #1. Those in favor say 'aye'; those opposed say 'no'. The 'ayes' have it. And the Resolution is adopted. Ladies and Gentlemen, let me have your attention, briefly, please. Listen up. The plan is that the Republicans are going to caucus immediately. The Pensions Committee will meet at 2:45 in Room 114. After the meeting of the Pensions Committee, we will return to the floor to consider a Bill which we expect will be reported by the Pensions Committee. So, again, Republicans are going to caucus and the Pensions Committee will meet at 2:45 in Room 114. After that, we shall return to the floor. The House shall stand at ease."

Speaker Madigan: "The House shall come to order. Mr. Clerk."

Clerk Hollman: "Committee Reports. Representative Nekritz, Chairperson from the Committee on Personnel & Pensions reports the following committee action taken on August 17, 2012: recommends be adopted is Floor Amendment #3 to Senate Bill 3168."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Bost."

Bost: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the rest of the day, Representative Reis and Representative Coladipietro could be excused."

Speaker Madigan: "Let the record reflect the excused absences. Mr. Reboletti."

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

Reboletti: "Mr. Speaker, I have an inquiry of the Chair and would like to know if the Senate is available to take any legislation up if we pass anything?"

Speaker Madigan: "President Cullerton told me they're available to receive messages. Did you have a message you wanted to send them?"

Reboletti: "Well, my message may be different than yours, Mr. Speaker, but I don't know if... they're not able to take any votes then. Is that correct? Not today. They're not in Springfield still, are they?"

Speaker Madigan: "I don't know the answer to that question. I know that I had a conversation with President Cullerton in this area and he said to me they're available to receive messages from the House."

Reboletti: "Thank you."

Speaker Madigan: "On the Order of House Calendar, Supplemental Calendar #1, there appears Senate Bill 3168. Representative Currie. Mr. Clerk, what is the status of the Bill?"

Clerk Hollman: "Senate Bill 3168, a Bill for an Act concerning public employee benefits. This Bill was read a second time on a previous day. Amendment #1 was adopted in committee. Floor Amendment #3, offered by Representative Currie, has been approved for consideration."

Speaker Madigan: "Representative Currie on the Amendment."

Currie: "Thank you, Speaker, Members of the House. We've been talking about pension reform for a very long time in this House of Representatives and I think every Member of the House would hope that sometime in the not distant future we might be able to define and enact comprehensive pension

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

reform for all five of the state systems. There has as yet been no consensus to do just that and in fact, a measure that came to us at the end of May from our colleagues in the Senate that covered only two of the pension systems has since been as badly discussed and described in the press and in the media. So, lacking the opportunity to offer comprehensive reform, I will offer Amendment 3 to Senate Bill 3168. This at least begins reform right here at home. This measure would affect only the Members of the General Assembly Retirement System and it would do what we've talked about doing with other systems at other times and at other places and that is it would offer current Members of the system the opportunity to either stick with the present three percent COLA compounded annually; if people do that, they would not be able to deem as pensionable income any salary increase and they would not be eligible for retiree health care. The other option would be to say I'll take a COLA that is three percent or one-half of the cost of living whichever is lower. That would be deferred for five years, but if I do that, then I will have the opportunity to make sure that all of my salary increases, should any be forthcoming, would count toward... for purposes of the pension and I would be eligible for whatever kind of health care the state makes available. This is not going to amount to huge savings in the retirement system. The Governor's Office of Management and Budget believes that the savings would be in the neighborhood of \$111 million in state contributions by 2045 and the immediate savings would be in the neighborhood of 43 to 45 million. Not a huge step from



STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

a financial perspective, but a huge step from the perspective of pension reform. If we vote 'yes' on this Amendment and this Bill today, I think we can go home to our constituents and say we've taken the first step. Not a major step, not a stride, but certainly a first step toward solving the state's fiscal problems by virtue of reforming the state pension systems. I'd be happy to answer your questions and I'd appreciate your support for this Amendment."

Speaker Madigan: "Representative Nekritz."

Nekritz: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Bill. Ladies and Gentlemen, we have a significant addre... problem to address in this state. As you all know, this year the pension payment... in fiscal year 2013, the pension payment increased about a billion dollars. Our entire new revenues were \$750 million estimated. The picture doesn't get any better for fiscal year '14. I initially thought that's one of the back of the envelope numbers were going to be that the pension payment would go up about 800 million. I think that's, you know, from what I'm hearing, it's probably going to be closer to a billion or a billion two. That's the increase in FY14 for the pension payment. COGFA, right now, is saying that that increase is going to be... or new revenues are going to be about a billion dollars. So, we are going to be right back in the same soup in fiscal year 2014 that we're in now. And it's because of the... the increase... it's got a lot of factors, but the increase in the pension payment is a big piece of that. And I expressed in committee my frustration with our... our... the... my sense that

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

the goal line on this particular piece of legislation is constantly moving. The Pensions Committee has passed out three very comprehensive Bills over the... over the last two years. None of those have had the ability to pass in this chamber and it's not because they're not comprehensive, which is what we're now hearing... oh, we need a comprehensive approach; we need it... we need it to be complete. We had those. We've had those Bills before this chamber, but they have not had the support they needed to move ahead. We had a Bill coming over from the Senate that addressed two of the systems in a... in a comprehensive way. Oh, no, we can't support that one because it's not comprehensive, even though we couldn't support the comprehensive one either. So, I have... there's a lot of frustration about this and our inability to move this ahead. We need to do something to demonstrate that this General Assembly can take action on this issue and set a precedent for how the other systems can be addressed. This Bill is that piece of legislation. I hear from constituents all the time, why don't you guys go first? Why don't you set the example? Well, Ladies and Gentlemen, we have the ability today to go first and to set that example. This is an important... it's a small step. It by no means addresses the crisis. The numbers don't even come close to... I mean, we're talking about a miniscule amount of money compared to what the crisis is and we all recognize that. That's, you know, we don't need to be debating about that, but we do need to be taking this step because of what it... what it

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

says to the public about our willingness to take action.  
And I urge an 'aye' vote."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Reboletti."

Reboletti: "My understanding is the Bill, Mr. Speaker, is still on Second Reading. We look forward to a vigorous debate on the issue on Third Reading. But I would just call the attention to all my colleagues that the Senate has adjourned for today and they might be able to receive messages, but any type of real pension reform, even one small step for the House and no giant step for the bond houses is not going to be called today. So, I think that's really important to be made aware of."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Franks."

Franks: "Mr. Speaker, I'd like to speak to the Bill, but if we're... are we going to be doing this on Third Reading or would this be more appropriate at this time?"

Speaker Madigan: "We'll probably debate this on Second Reading."

Franks: "Okay."

Speaker Madigan: "Then take a record vote on Second Reading."

Franks: "Thank you. Then if I may, I'd like to speak..."

Speaker Madigan: "Please proceed."

Franks: "...to the Amendment."

Speaker Madigan: "Please proceed."

Franks: "Thank you. Thank you. Our pension problems, Ladies and Gentlemen, are much worse than we have been told. We don't owe \$83 billion; we owe much more. Our government has been using unobtainable estimates in anticipating an 8.3 percent return while the rest of the world is using about five and

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

half percent. Therefore, we wished we owed only \$83 billion, in reality, it's probably close to \$120 billion. So, we first need to be truthful about our expected rate of return and I don't believe this administration has been forthcoming when it says it can get an eight... eight and a half percent return annually. And our pension liability threatens to choke out many state services, if the amount owed continues to grow. Our tax hike that we did a few years ago is set to expire soon and as we know, the increased revenue went almost exclusively to pay the pension provisions, yet we are in worse shape than before the tax increase. So, we have an obligation to work to not make this tax increase permanent. Now, if the prior tax hike would have gone to fund education and fundamentally change our funding formulas, we would be having a much different discussion today. I believe that our Governor has not been an effective Leader on this. He said two years ago that fixing the pension was his number one priority and last year he said the same thing. Six months ago he said the same thing. When we were here in May, he said that he... we're not... he's going to call a Special Session to keep us here in Session every day until we do this and that didn't happen. Now, like you, I had hoped for a comprehensive pension reform and we should certainly continue working towards that. This is a start and I believe this is something the Governor must lead on. But looking at this Bill, the Constitution says that we are to be part-time Legislature, that we are public servants. So, the philosophical question is why should a part-time elected

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

official get a pension in the first place? And remember this, Legislators already have a deferred comp option on top of their pension. So, there already is the ability for Legislators to put money away. We also have other retirement options because if we're working in the private sector, we also have the ability to enter into a 401(k) as well as to re... also have Social Security. So, some of the arguments that we're somehow shortchanging Members of the General Assembly, I believe are hollow. Now, some people will say, we don't know how the bond houses will react. And that's a good question. But the fact is we need to do this because it's the right thing to do. It saves \$111 million. That's not insignificant, but certainly it's not a panacea. It's just a start. I'm disappointed and like you, I demand more. What I'm hoping is that the Governor will call us back tomorrow and not let us leave until we solve this problem. We need to have a Special Session with the Committee of the Whole, right here on the House Floor, and bring the Senate. Bring all the stakeholders, current employees and retirees, everyone. Lock us in this room until we get it done. Before that, though, I urge you to vote 'yes' on this Bill. It's a start."

Speaker Madigan: "Representative Kay."

Kay: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Members of the General Assembly. It is somewhat hard to know where to begin here today. Leader Currie, you made mention of the fact that this is something that if we don't pass we would be hard-pressed to look our voters in the face. Well, frankly, I wouldn't be hard-pressed to look voters in the face and explain why I

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

voted for this Bill and I'll explain that to you. But I have some questions of the Sponsor, if I could? Why did we start here?"

Currie: "Because traditionally we start with ourselves. We did that when we created a two-tier system where new employees, new state employees, would have a different pension program, later retirement age, all the rest. We started with ourselves."

Kay: "Well, Ma'am, I didn't..."

Currie: "If we can do it with ourself..."

Kay: "Thank you, thank you."

Currie: "...than maybe we'll be motivated..."

Kay: "Thank you."

Currie: "...to go beyond."

Kay: "I didn't take... I didn't take a pension, so all of that's meaningless to me. But when we're talking about unfunded liability, it's the highest in the United States of America, why would we start with a savings of \$111 million when we should be looking at a Bill that Senator McCarter filed yesterday that he and I worked with all summer long that will save you over a lifetime of 2045, at least 150 billion."

Currie: "Represent..."

Kay: "We're talking 111 million as opposed to 150 billion."

Currie: "Representative, I would prefer a comprehensive approach, been there, done that, tried it, never have had the votes for it. This is a different approach and in my view, if you look at what happened with the two-tier retirement system, we did start with ourselves. It didn't

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

mean we stopped with ourselves. I would urge your 'yes' vote."

Kay: "Yeah. Well, and let me remind you, if I'm not mistaken the two-tier was all systems, wasn't it?"

Currie: "Not the first one. The first one was the General Assembly."

Kay: "No, no, no, no. I don't think that's correct, but let me... let me just continue. That's... that's really not worth arguing about. Let me... let me just say this. The reason that I'm a little bit disturbed is that I come out of the private sector and in the private sector anybody that looks at this piece of legislation as a show-stopper would say it doesn't stop the show. In fact, it doesn't do anything. It lacks vision and it shows a failure of leadership, period. Failure of leadership, period. Leader Currie, I know that you have been here a long time and I want you to take this at face value. I have a lot of respect for you. You're a good Legislator; you're a smart woman. You typically come well prepared, but understand this and I don't mean to be curt or cute. We didn't just blow in with yesterday's leaves. Many of us in this room come from financial backgrounds; we understand money. We understand a good plan from a bad one. We can smell the odor of a plan that won't work and we can also tell the odor of a bankrupt state. And I will tell you that we're headed down that path and this Bill does nothing to save us, nothing to save us. I would challenge you to pull this Bill, look at the Bill that Senator McCarter has filed on the Senate side that he and I have worked with all summer and you will find a

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

comprehensive plan that will bring us to ground zero that very few people can argue with unless... unless they want to be politicians. Let me just say this very quickly and in closing. I'd asked you the question, is this all there is? Is this all there is? You say it's a start, but it starts nothing. It simply says we're going to make an attempt for political purposes in a political year to run something out in a Special Session so that we can have nice walk cards and do TV ads and maybe even, maybe even, get a few mailers out there that make one Party or the other look bad. And I think that's really disgraceful. Frankly, I find it disgraceful. Now, you may disagree and I think from a practical standpoint if you do I accept that because I do think you're a purposeful Legislator. But I think you know as I do that this does little or nothing other than put a sta... a political stamp of approval on a piece of legislation that's bad. Not... not a financial fix, not a... not a fix that's going to resonate with the general public, not a long-term fix that will do anything for the State of Illinois with the bond markets that we seem to be very concerned about. So, let's pull this Bill. Let's take a look at something that is comprehensive and makes good financial sense and let's move on from the politics of the day and do the business of the people of the State of Illinois. Thank you."

Speaker Madigan: "David Harris."

Harris, D.: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ladies and Gentlemen of the House, the Majority Leader from Cook County has, over her distinguished career, introduced probably and carried



STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

probably some of the most meaningful legislation in the history of this chamber. Unfortunately, this piece of legislation is not one of them. You know, let's ask ourselves, why are we here? We are here, technically, because the Governor called a Special Session to deal with pensions and the Governor said we have to have total pension reform. Is there a Bill on the table to give us total pension reform? Absolutely not. During the regular Session, the Governor said he'd keep us, as we heard earlier, he'd keep us in Session day in and day out until we solved the problem. Well, we adjourned at the end of the regular Session and what happened, nothing. So, when the Speaker calls a Session to deal with the report of the Committee on Discipline, the Governor says, well, wouldn't it be nice, we'll call a Special Session on that day since they're going to be down there anyway. This is a Leadership driven institution and it would be nice to have some real leadership at the top of the chain. Is there anyone in this chamber or across the rotunda who does not think that we have a pension problem? I don't think so. We need some real leadership. Now, in 2011, the Minority Leader and the Speaker cosponsored Senate Bill 512. That took guts. It was a tough Bill. It was a contentious Bill, but it stimulated debate. It stimulated real discussion. Where was our Governor on Senate Bill 512? Eerily quiet, not a word. So, we move into 2012 and we have a Pension Commission from the Governor that's going to issue a report on April the 1st. April the 1st, I think we're in August. Has anybody seen that report yet? No, I don't think so. I don't think so.

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

You know, if... if he was put on this earth, as it was reported, if he was put on this earth to do pension reform, then get out there and sell it. You go to every Bingo hall, you go to every union hall, you go to every American Legion and VFW post in this state from Cairo to Freeport to East St. Louis to Charleston to Chicago to Carbondale and you tell the people of the State of Illinois, you know what, the state's going down the tubes unless we have pension reform. That's leadership; that's what we need. Every needed service in the State of Illinois that is required by... by the state to fund for the people who deserve the services, every needed service is going to suffer because more and more revenue is being consumed by pensions. The chair of the Pensions Committee made that statement and it's clear, which brings me to the numbers. Let's look at the numbers for a second and we all got a copy of this Bill, a report on the financial conditions of the Illinois State Retirement Systems issued by COGFA. And let's look at absolute numbers as reported by COGFA, the unfunded liability, the 83 billion which let's just for sake of argument say is accurate. Of that 83 billion, 43.8 billion is in TRS, 20.4 billion is in SERS, 17.2 billion is in SURS, the judges is 1.3 billion and GARS, \$238 million of that unfunded \$85 billion liability. This Bill is worse than nothing. You know what this message sends to the bond houses? It sends the message that this Body, this General Assembly, cannot do what is needed to reform our pension system. It sends an absolutely terrible message. And if you think that we're going to avoid the opprobrium that's

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

written every day about us in the editorial pages around this state, forget it. This is going to be worse. They're going to say they didn't have the guts to do what they needed to do. This is not a step in the right direction. It is not a step in the right direction. This Bill deserves to fail. I strongly urge a 'no' vote because the people of the State of Illinois deserve better than what is in front of us right now."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Biss."

Biss: "Thank you, Speaker. Will the Sponsor yield?"

Speaker Madigan: "Sponsor yields."

Biss: "Leader Currie, I was really moved by Representative Nekritz's point that we've seen a lot of goal posts move on this issue. One set of goal posts that has moved from what I can tell even during the summer is simply the question of how big the problem is and what that means, constitutes an adequate solution. What level of benefit adjustment is needed to make the whole thing affordable? One of my concerns about doing GARS separately and first, before agreement has been reached elsewhere, is what if we do this, we pass it, it becomes law and then we discover that deeper cuts are needed to assure the solvency of the state for the other systems? It's my view that in that scenario it would be appropriate and almost ethically necessary to come back and enact those deeper cuts for the General Assembly as well. Would you agree with that assessment?"

Currie: "I would."

Biss: "Okay. Well, thank you very much. To the Bill. Everybody knows how serious our pension problem is in the State of

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

Illinois. The seriousness is why I, against all sane political advice, asked to be on the Pension Committee when I showed up here. And I have to say that the most sobering aspect of my service in the General Assembly has been sitting simultaneously on the Pension Committee and on two Appropriation Committees and seeing the cuts we've had to make in key, key areas of programmatic spending that determine our state's ability to be prosperous and secure as we have seen our pension payments grow annually in a measure that's almost indescribable. So, I joined the Pension Committee hoping that we would have a real thoughtful serious discussion about how to address this problem and I have to say that I've been a little bit disappointed on that score. We've seen a series of Bills, some I liked, some I didn't like and a lot of ideas thrown out, but we haven't really had a statewide comprehensive, transparent, real conversation about what is the problem and how do we solve it. We've had sort of a... a traveling freak show of people yelling at each other on all different sides and people pointing fingers and people blaming somebody else, but the truth of the matter is the nature of the problem is such that it affects everybody and everyone's stake ought to be on the same side of solving it. Sometimes I've gotten to the place, watching this play out, that I wonder if it's the case that we'll ever have a vote on a comprehensive pension Bill in the full House, maybe it will just... keep on voting on Bills in committee, one after the next, and always spare the full Body the decision of whether to vote for a given imperfect Bill

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

because, indeed, every Bill that's going to come out of this process is imperfect as is, without question, the Bill that's before us today. But here's the vent. If we want to move the conversation in a reasonable direction, I think it's our responsibility to do everything we possibly can to create a venue where that conversation will happen. There's a lot of talk about what signal voting for this Bill sends. Is it good? Do we look good to the voters? Do we look good to the editorial boards? Well, guess what, we all look like idiots. I'll say it again. We all, not the Governor, not the other side, not our side, we all look like idiots. So, don't worry about it. Don't worry about what political message it sends. Worry about whether getting 60 votes for a piece of pension reform Bill moves the conversation forward and creates a venue where we can try to have the useful, constructive, thoughtful, collaborative, statewide discussion about how to solve this problem. I can't promise you it will, but I sure as hell hope it will and I think the chances are good enough that it's important that we sit down, push our green buttons and move this conversation forward so we can solve this problem for everybody. Thank you."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Bost."

Bost: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Bill. I respect my colleague that just spoke on the other side of the aisle, but I look at it from a different standpoint. I know it surprises you I'm not going to throw a Bill. I'm not going to pound the desk. Hey, I know it upsets you. But let me tell you the response I got from that around this state.

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

What I got was, the former speaker said we all look like idiots. We do. We do because we kept getting led down paths like this. Bills that are brought out that do nothing. All they do is line up a political vote for people who are running for office. All they do is set out there and oh, my goodness, we're going to make this vote this way and we can tell them this. That's not true, but that's what we're going to tell them. Folks, when do we get off the political bandwagon and get on the wagon of doing what's right for the people of the State of Illinois and really cure the problem. When? When? When do we let it stop playing games when we've worked on a Bill at the end of this last Session that I got so upset about? I got so upset because we had worked together. We were touching on many areas. Were there places where we agreed and places where we disagreed? Yes. But what happens? We gut the Bill and then throw out a Bill that does something completely different. Now, we come back here so that the Governor can answer to the press pop he got in... on national news media, it said he's doing something by bringing us back. To do what? Someone said this is a step forward. Yeah, if you consider that we're looking at Mount Everest and we're climbing on a molehill because that's all this does. And I'm kind of wondering if the ground isn't so weak underneath it that... that it's a molehill and when we stand it, we fall deeper into the ground. We just going to pass this piece of legislation? We're going to vote for it so we can go out and say, see, we wanted to do something for pension. Or... or let's say, look at it this way, we have some Members that are going to

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

vote 'no' and then all of a sudden you're going to attack them and go, see, they don't really want to do anything for pension. No, that's not right. What is right is that we would take up a real Bill that really deals with the problem, that cures our bond issues, that cures this pension system to a place where somebody can at least feel that when they get to retirement or when they're sitting at home at 90, all of a sudden there isn't going to become this little yellow slip from the State of Illinois that says, hey, you know that pension system you had, yeah, there's no money in that anymore. When we really need to deal with breaking this system down and fixing the problems for our children and our grandchildren, but instead we're going to play games for the next election. You know, I've heard the definition that a politician is somebody who votes for the next election and a statesman is somebody who votes for the next generation. I'm asking you to be statesmen. Vote 'no'. Demand that we stay here, demand that we fix a problem and truly fix the problem instead of playing these political games that continue to go on in the State of Illinois to the point that people around the nation laugh at us. Laugh at us. Yeah, like the former... like the former speaker said, yeah, yeah, we're... we're... we all look bad. We all look like idiots. What a shame when we can really fix the problem if we'll just stand up and do what we've been elected to do and really cure the problem."

Speaker Madigan: "Representative Senger."

Senger: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Bill. There's been... the previous speaker just mentioned about how this doesn't even

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

begin to create an ant hill, in regards to the problem that we have right now with pensions. This Bill is even worse than that. This Bill does not go far enough. We know, working through the pension problems, what it's going to take to move the pendulum to get this thing working once and for all. And I think the last thing everybody here wants to do is to have to go through this again because we're not getting it done well enough. Not only is this not fixing the problem, but this will not get you to the point that this General Assembly will have a retirement when they retire. In order to do that, we have the worst funded retirement system out there and in order to do that, we're going to have to talk about not only adjusting COLAs but contributing more and possibly delaying until we collect our retirement. I mean, it's broken that bad. On top of it working, it's been very frustrating 'cause the last two weeks the conversation, basically working as the work group, has been we have a pension problem and if we don't get something fixed, you have an ultimatum next year, school districts, you either take the cost shift or we're going to cut general state aid. You want to know something that's going to happen next year? We're going to cut general state aid. This Bill does not go into effect until 2014, June or I should say July 1, 2014. So, there is no reprieve at all next year on this budget. The longer we wait to get a comprehensive plan done, the more you're going to hurt human services. You're going to hurt education. You're going to hurt everything in the state. We're going to be cutting more. Our pension payment next



STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

year is going to be \$6.5 billion and then we have a repayment of a pension obligation which is going to add up to \$8 billion. You have no reprieve next year at all. This does not go into effect until 2014. The longer we stay and wait to get this done, the more you're hurting everybody in the state. And I am very frustrated because we had a Bill at the end of the year and it.. and the excuses were extreme. The cost shift was a deal breaker. It doesn't even make sense. It's not reform. Reform is moving the numbers on a pension problem that gets us to the point that we're not bankrupting the state. So, this does absolutely nothing. It's a poor Bill. It doesn't even take care of what we have as a problem for the General Assembly and on top of that, each and every one of us are going to have to vote whether they'll take the deal or not. And I can bet you there's a big majority in here that's going to say I'm not going to go for the reduced COLAs which then even puts us at a more dire situation. I am not going to vote for this. I think it's a farce. I think we're basically coming out and saying we're doing something and we're absolutely not and it's a real disservice for those who live in the state because we're going to look like, oh, we're doing... we're beating our chest, we're so great. We can do pension reform, but then next year we're in the same position we are again. Thank you."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Fortner."

Fortner: "Thank you, Speaker. To the Amendment. One thing I've heard, both from proponents and opponents of this Amendment to the Bill, is that we should have comprehensive reform.

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

Sounds like we all agree on that. So, to start out, why would we need to start with this one piece? With all respect to the Sponsor and those who have supported that, I think we have had a long time of hearing a lot of ideas. A lot of ideas, some of which were very well rooted and have been very well vetted to see how we could get the kind of savings, the kind of reduction liability that we need to start denting the 83 billion or perhaps more that is the largest in the nation. Previous speakers mentioned Senate Bill 512, a Bill that was supported by a lot of people in this chamber, but I would be remiss to say there were perhaps problems. Certainly, our colleagues across the rotunda expressed some serious concerns with parts of that Bill. I'll tell you what, I listened to that. I looked at what they had to say and went to work because I thought comprehensive reform was still possible using the kinds of ideas that at that point had support. Eventually, I filed House Bill 5754 and was very pleased that I was able to get a hearing in the Pensions Committee that tried to fix those things. That committee gave it a very timely and lengthy hearing. I really appreciate the... the fact that they did so. But out of deference to the Governor's task force that was meeting at the time and we were still at that point waiting on a possible report from that task force, I deferred, said let's wait. But again, I took notes 'cause there were comments from colleagues from Members of that committee that I thought would make it even stronger. I also had the advantage, as did many of the other ideas that other Members of this chamber have put into Bills of

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

having, since we had a lot of time during the spring, of having COGFA look at those numbers and what kind of savings could we realize. We talk a lot about the COLAs and they are certainly something that can reduce this large liability facing the state, but they're not the only ones. Some of these other ideas also have merit. Ideas that will do more than just reduce the liability, but reduce the rate of growth. And to me that's the most important thing because if we cannot stem the rate of growth of what we are paying into the pensions, they will continue to crowd out everything else in the budget. The ramp payments on the pensions are growing at, on the average, double the rate of the growth of our revenue. That means each year it has to get a bigger and bigger slice of the pie. The only thing we're going to do is to not just bring down the costs in one small area or with one small tool, but do something to restructure it in a way that actually brings the rate of growth to something sustainable, something that is at or below the rate of our revenue growth. So, rather than crowding out the other parts of the budget, it starts making room for other things in the budget. With all that in mind, a few weeks ago I filed House Bill 6204 and I've gotten a lot of good feedback on that. I think it reflects a lot of the ideas that could go towards a framework of comprehensive reform. Is mine the only one, no. We heard from Representative Kay. He's been working on something as well. So, I think those ideas are there. I think we've had a long time where a lot of these ideas... we know how much savings we're going to get from a lot of these different

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

ideas. They've had the chance to go through COGFA, to be seen by the actuaries of the various systems. Taking action on this small piece today I think leaves us in a position, as has been previously noted, of perhaps taking a step back. Let's see how that works. I don't think we can afford that. Already by spending this whole last year not able to produce something, we're now into fiscal year '13. So, now we're likely to start something in fiscal year '14. I think we can ill afford to let another year slip by in the same fashion. So, with that in mind, I would strongly recommend that we take up the many ideas that are there and let's not try to do a fix too small and too ineffective. And I would ask for a 'no' vote on this Amendment."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Reboletti."

Reboletti: "Mr. Speaker, I'm going to ask for a recorded vote and a verification of that vote. I thought you said it's on Third Reading, but I guess we'll do it on Second. But to the... to the Bill. Ladies and Gentlemen of the House, I urge you to join me right now in inviting Governor Quinn to come up here to the podium and address us and explain to us how this exactly solves the problem of our pension system. I have listened to the Governor take a tour of the state, talk to the editorial boards, and explain there is an extreme pension crisis which we're all well aware of. And we need broad solutions and we're... we need to send a clear message to the bond house. Well, the first message we sent to them was that the upper chamber's already gone and won't be voting on anything today. That's the first thing we've told them. The second thing we've told them is that we're

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

going to now take my 10-year-old son's piggy bank to throw at a \$100 billion problem. How's that going to... Oh, the bond houses are already reacting to that. The savings are so clear. How will all these pension systems work together now since they're all reciprocal? Maybe we all support this. Maybe... I'm not sure. I had the misfortune of being here all summer with Governor Blagojevich and his 26 Sessions, Special Sessions, that went nowhere also. I call for a Committee of the Whole right now. We have people who can come down here and testify about the solutions. Why only do it for the Pension Committee? Maybe, for those of you who remember the gross receipts tax, we can put all these ideas up on a Resolution and vote them up or down. Or we'll simply do what the State of California and issue IOUs to the people in the pension system. I wonder how they'll pay their mortgage and car payments then. Maybe this is just a nice way to try to figure out if our Illinois Supreme Court will agree if this is diminishment or not. Wouldn't that be interesting? I'm sure the lawsuit will be filed as soon as the Governor's ink is dry on the paper. On May 31, I stood here and asked the unions to contact me so I could file their proposal. I haven't received any phone calls, not to file a proposal, not in Addison and not in Springfield. Maybe the next legal battle we'll be in is if we will be the first state in the nation to try to file bankruptcy because we are now... we're going to be with Greece and Spain and the rest of Europe at junk bond status. And when these bonds get called, nobody will get paid. No providers, no hospitals, no retirees, but wow, we

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

have now solved the pension problem. We'll take this small step on this long journey. Actually, if you do the numbers, and I'm not a numbers guy, I'm a lawyer by trade, my understanding is over the years it will actually cost us more. We'll be filing appropriations for the members in the system. There's no savings here. I don't believe that to be any savings. We try to set... lead by example before. We all take furlough days. We all take reduced mileage. We all take reduced per diems. How far did that go? Being cut one cent out of everybody's budget and say, boy, we all stood together. We made the tough decisions. Then we can all run back home and say, wow, Reboletti didn't vote for pension reform. The editorial boards all across the state, I'm sure, will be mixed in our decision. I ask the Governor to call a Special Session right now for the rest of the day 'til tomorrow until this thing gets done. Otherwise, the problem isn't going away. It's not going to go away in Veto Session. It's not going to go away next year. And at sometime, the piper will have to be paid."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Morrison."

Morrison: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Bill. You know, I've heard a few people here saying and also down in the committee, the Pension Committee, that GARS has to take the first step. We, as a General Assembly, have to take the first step and I wholeheartedly agree with that point. It's the reason why I ran and I've talked about it repeatedly in my district, I've talked about it to my constituents, both those in the pension system and outside the pension system, this Body along with previous Governors, created the

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

problem. This Body overpromised and is now underdelivering. That's really what it comes down to. We made all of these enormous promises. People make decisions in their lives based on those promises and now, oh, sorry. Well, we... sorry. That's really what's happening. So, it's to those who are in the pension plans and then, as the point has been made repeatedly very well, all of the other portions of the state's budget that are being squeezed and will be squeezed for decades to come unless we fix this problem now. And I do believe it should start right here in the General Assembly. And there are a number of us who just got here, we just arrived, we inherited a lot of these problems, but we ran because we wanted to fix these problems. We did not want to be part of the problem, we wanted to fix it. My friend and colleague, Representative Kay stood up. He said he opted out of the pension, a number of us have done that. A number of people who are running in this upcoming election have decided, you know what, I'm going to be a citizen Legislator. I want to be a servant leader. The point's been brought up a couple of times, well, who are you going to get to run for the Legislature if, you know, you don't have a defined benefit plan? Well, there have a lot... there are a lot of us who've decided to run for the Legislature because we want to do what's right for the citizens of the state. You know, there's a portrait hanging right over here. Our... one of our greatest Presidents of all time was actually in this Body. He didn't have a defined benefit pension. There are people who want to serve and do the right thing and yes, hard choices have

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

to be made. And yes, it's probably going to mean that those who are expecting to get a certain retirement, you know what, they're probably going to be let down. But better to be honest with them now and solve this problem before it grows because it is growing. It's growing daily. So, yes, let's start with the General Assembly and let's start to see some people make a personal sacrifice. What... what a statement it would make to the citizens of this state if we had our Governor or Leader Currie or Speaker Madigan or Treasurer Rutherford or Comptroller Topinka, what if we had or anyone else... I would invite anyone else in this Body or over in the Senate... what if we had some people say, you know what, I'm part of the problem because we passed budgets that weren't balanced even though the Constitution says they're supposed... we're supposed to balance the budget. You know, growing up... I'm 37 years old... growing up I've heard almost my whole life, we need to spend more money on education. I know this is GARS that we're talking about, but everybody in the room knows that TRS and SURS are the big... the 500 pound gorillas in the room. And growing up I heard constantly, you know, we need more money for education, more money for higher ed, more money for early education. Never did I here a politician say, gee, you know, we made a lot of promises to our future retirees. We better set some money aside to make sure that we've got money to pay those people when they retire. I didn't ever hear that. So, what I'm saying is, as collectively, this Body needs to own up to the problem. What a statement it would make if we had our Governor or Leader Currie or



STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

Speaker Madigan or Treasurer Rutherford or Comptroller... or anyone else say, you know what, those contributions that I've made into GRAS... GARS I'm going to roll those into a 401(k). I'm sure we'd have to pass a Bill to do it. I'm sure we'd have to do that, but what if we just took your current... your contributions up to this point whether you've been here for two years, two months, 30 years, 35 years, whatever. What if we took those and rolled those into a 401(k) and then we addressed the other pension plans which we all agree need to be done. And we say to the people of the State of Illinois, yes, we have made a personal sacrifice and now we need to do the right thing for everybody else so that you get something when you retire rather than 100 percent of nothing which is going to happen to those younger workers. We all know that. I think that would be a really bold and right move. That's what we should do. And you know, for those who say that, well, you know, GARS is only 18 percent funded, so if all of a sudden, you know, General Assembly Members stop paying into it, well, you know, it's... that's what happens in a Ponzi scheme if you don't have newer people paying into it. But we all agree, GARS, it's just a crumb when you consider the entire loaf. So, if we stopped paying into GARS, let's just go with this idea for a minute or so, we're talking about a very, very small hit. But I think it would be a necessary step, again, to the point, yes, we need to be first, we need to make the personal sacrifice before we go after the other plans, but I think it's doable. And I would... I would urge this Body to at least consider that, to bring

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

everybody together, to bring the entire state together, all these stakeholders, those who are protesting out in the Capitol and on the lawn. But you know what, when I talk to people in my district whether they're teachers or state workers or just, you know, just the regular Joe citizen, they say fix the problem. Fix the problem. And some of the people I've talked to said, you know what, I'd be willing to pay more. I'd be willing to accept a little bit less, adjust my COLA, but just give me some kind of guarantee that I'm going to get something. Right now they're not going to get a guarantee. And by us not acting responsibly, I don't know that we're going to be able to make the case to our constituents that we are serious about this. Other states have done it. They've taken a comprehensive approach. Rhode Island, they looked at the math. They said, you know what, it doesn't work. We can't make the math work. You can't raise taxes to solve it. You can't do it by... by avoiding the COLA. You can't do it by skipping current workers. You have to take a comprehensive approach. I would urge a 'no' vote so that we do not think we're finished with this. We have to do this for all five systems. Thank you."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Watson."

Watson: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Sponsor yield?"

Speaker Madigan: "Sponsor yields."

Watson: "Representative, I... if... help me with my memory. If the Governor said last week that we have to come back because he's afraid about the consequences from bond ratings, what the bond houses are going to do. Do you remember that?"

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

Currie: "I think I saw that in the newspaper."

Watson: "So, what do you think this Bill... how do you think the bond houses will react? Do you think... is this... are they going to see this and go, wow?"

Currie: "I don't know what the bond houses will say, but I will say this. If we do nothing today, our options today are two: we can do nothing..."

Watson: "No, that's..."

Currie: "...or we can adopt Amendment 3."

Watson: "There were plenty of options..."

Currie: "The bond houses will..."

Watson: "...there were plenty of options..."

Currie: "...surely give us... You asked a question."

Watson: "There were plenty of options and you choose not bring them forth."

Currie: "I'm answering your question, Sir. The bond houses, I think, will look certainly askance at our inability to adopt Amendment 3 to Senate Bill 3168."

Watson: "Let... let me say this, Representative. There were lots of other options that the bond houses would have liked and you chose not to call them, so you will have to deal with it. Number 2, you said this was a first step. What's the second step?"

Currie: "I believe that the second step would be the other systems. I was prepared today to offer..."

Watson: "You want to treat all the other systems like this. Is that your goal?"

Currie: "...to offer an Amendment that covered not just the General Assembly but also the State Employee Retirement

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

System. Unfortunately, the Minority Leadership in both the House and the Senate trashed that idea in the media. And I was left with the option of at least starting somewhere. This is not a game."

Watson: "Wow."

Currie: "This not a trade. We must start somewhere. This is..."

Watson: "So... so, this is all Tom Cross's fault?"

Currie: "...a better place to start than zero."

Watson: "But this... this isn't a national campaign. It's like this is George Bush's fault? Is that... The next step then... you were saying the next step is... is you're going to treat the other... other systems like this?"

Currie: "Not identically, but I think this is a good first step. We did the same thing when we did the two-tier employee..."

Watson: "No, we..."

Currie: "...retirement system a couple of years ago. We did us early..."

Watson: "So, is this..."

Currie: "...and then we were able to use that momentum to do the other employees as well."

Watson: "Representative, is this a paradigm of how you want to move forward next year?"

Currie: "In fact, some of the same provisions in this Amendment that affects only the General Assembly System in Amendment 2, would have covered the State Employees Retirement System too, not all but several."

Watson: "I would say to you and to my colleagues whom I respect on the other side of the aisle, we handled the budget

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

cooperatively. We had a group of people that sat down in the room and worked together and we made hard choices. My district's suffering for some of those choices, so are some of the other colleagues, but you did it cooperatively. You want to know why the Minority Leader's backed off, is it because you decided to go your own way. If this is the paradigm that you want, I'll say this is how you want to go forth next year, then you can do the budget by yourself, you can handle pensions by yourself, you can handle all those issues by yourself. But that scares the hell out of me 'cause that's why we're in the system that's... we're in the shape that we're in."

Speaker Madigan: "We're going to do two more people. Mr. Brauer and then Mr. Cross. Mr. Brauer."

Brauer: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll be brief. To the Bill. Thomas Jefferson left us with a warning. He says, 'Democracies soon cease to exist when you take from those willing to work and give to those who would not'. We haven't really gone back on our promise on these pensions; we've overspent. We've had an \$8 billion tax increase. We've had uncontrolled expansion on our entitlements. We've gone from 7 to 15 and a half billion dollars on Medicaid in five years. That's gone from an eighth to a quarter of our budget. We're talking about adding a half a million people to a 2.7 million program already out of the 13 million people in the state. We cannot continue to not control our expenses and expect to take that income from our working men and women of the state. We have to control our expenses. 'Democracies soon cease to exist when you take

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

from those willing to work and give to those who would not'."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Cross."

Cross: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I... a lot of things have been said most of... most of it I've agreed with, some of it I've struggled to accept and frankly, haven't accepted. I just want to go over a few points that... about what this Bill does and what this Bill does not do. And I think folks on our side have made this perfectly clear, this is a Bill that provides cover in a political campaign. It's a political vote. It is a Bill that is perfect for those of you that view yourself as populist and want to say that you did something. And I suspect that if this Bill passes today, obviously, it's going nowhere in the Senate, there'll be people taking victory laps and saying, we did pension reform and we did great things and we should be proud of ourselves. Should we do something on the General Assembly, of course? Should we do things on abuse, of course? But in the context of this overall problem, I think we would all agree that this does absolutely nothing. Let's think about why we got here today on Friday of this month. The Governor called us back and said we have got to address pension reform in a comprehensive manner. This is our Governor. He said, we're spending \$12 million a day when we don't address pension reform. We have an 83 to 85 billion dollar unfunded liability that next year will go to 93 billion, Moody says \$130 billion in unfunded liability. We will be spending in this year's budget \$7 billion on pension related items; in next year's budget, \$8 billion on

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

pension related items. Nobody in this room or in this... on this floor can tell an annuitant or a soon-to-be annuitant that you will definitely have a pension down the road and the whole issue of crowding out... the whole issue of crowding out which has been a problem because of the escalation of our annual payments has been a huge problem. As we said, we'll spend over \$8 billion in the next year's budget. We walked in this morning with all of those problems. If this Bill passes, we will still owe \$12 million a day or it will accumulate. We will still have an \$85 billion unfunded liability growing to 93 and if you listen to Moody's, over 130 billion. We will still be the worst funded pension system in the country. The worst funded pension system in the country. We will still spend \$7 billion this year on pension related items and next year over 8. We will still have to say to annuitants, I am very sorry. We cannot promise you that you'll have a pension down the road. And we will still have the crowding out problem. Nothing changes from the minute we walked in this morning to the day... 'til we leave here today. This Bill does nothing in the scheme of the problem we have. So, before you start taking the victory laps and it sounds good to the coffee shop crowd or to the press, perhaps, anybody that's followed this that cares about it that wants to solve it knows that this is nothing but the move of a populist. It's the... it's the great playbook that you have that says how do we look like we're doing something when we're really doing nothing. We've been down this road. You've got a chapter. You've got it figured out very, very

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

well. You follow it often. We did it on comp. We did it on campaign finance reform and you want to do it today on pensions. And what I guess I just find challenging or questioning someone in an earlier comment said the playing field has changed or the goal lines have changed. I would like to think that we all have the same goal line that we want to pass a comprehensive reform Bill. I think the playing field has gotten larger. When we started talking about this two years ago, when we filed a Bill two years ago, we had one unfunded liability number and it continues to grow. And for those of you that think that this is going to be easy to solve and by doing things like today, the sad part of that is it doesn't get easier; it gets tougher and tougher and tougher. So, those of you that want an easy vote, get that out of your heads. It isn't going to happen. The playing field gets larger and larger because of the magnitude of the problem as Representative Senger, Representative Harris, and Representative Kay said. We need to stop the politics. We have, as Jim Watson, I thought, so articulately said, the idea of collaboration, the idea of working together, the idea of coming together makes a lot of sense. We really are at a point where we may not have a pension system down the road. And as I've said before, people around this state think that only happens somewhere else not here. Well, we're on the verge of that. And the fact that we want to, even today on a Special Session day, play politics with the biggest issue of all times is troubling. We have been committed to getting pension reform done. We will remain committed. We will stay here for as



STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

long as it takes and work with you on all of the issues but it needs to be done in a very, very comprehensive manner. This doesn't even come close. Now, the Governor will, in all likelihood, depending on the success or failure of this Bill, want to say to the General Assembly, perhaps Republicans, my guess is there are a number of Democrats that might not even vote for this, they get it, didn't act to take care of their own pensions. And Governor, I'm sorry and with all due respect, if we're going to do this we need to do it right. You acknowledged this early in the spring that we needed to do a real comprehensive pension Bill and I applauded you at the time for that. You took up in a very bold manner a number of ideas that needed to be addressed. Things that we had talked about and things we supported. It was only in concept form; we never saw a Bill; we haven't seen a Bill yet, but you talked about it. And it's ironic that we went from a great, great plan and some good vision to doing a Bill that may save \$50 million off of a \$130 billion unfunded liability. We got out of Session the end of May. We've had two meetings. We haven't had a meeting in two months. As Dennis Reboletti I think appropriately said, we'd like you to engage in this conversation. We'd like you to bring us back. We'd like you to have intense... intensive negotiations. This is not something that we can put off down the road. I want to make it very clear. We are ready to get this done. A lot of politics is going on around here. I realize the season. I know perhaps that the... the Fair for you on Wednesday wasn't particularly good and has added some impact perhaps on why we're not doing SERS, but

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

the reality is we have to get something done. We have to get something done that is substantive, it's comprehensive and sends a message to the business community, the bond houses, the annuitants, that we get it. And we stand willing and ready to work with you. The idea of playing politics, the idea of saying we're in the Majority, we run the place, take it or leave it. That's old style politics. That doesn't work with the problems we have today. We did some things this past cycle that we... in the last Session we didn't want to do. We had some great division in our caucus, but we did it because of the problems we have. So, we continue with that approach on... will continue with that approach on pensions and we were willing to work with you starting tonight or in the morning or whenever you're ready and willing to do it on your side and along with the Governor. And we hope the President of the Senate returns soon so we can engage the Senate as well on the Democrat side to get this done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker."

Speaker Madigan: "Representative Currie to close briefly."

Currie: "Thank you, Speaker and Members of the House. More than a time or two over the last several years our Pension Committee has reported favorably comprehensive pension reform usually in a bipartisan fashion. And where have those proposals gone, nowhere. They've gone to the dustbin because there is not consensus for comprehensive pension reform today. My view is that we have to start somewhere. We're not able, we don't have the will as yet to do comprehensive. Let's start at the beginning. Let us start with ourselves. If we can't do pension reform to the

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
97th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

8/17/2012

General Assembly Retirement System, who back at home will think that there's a chance in the world we'll do anything more. There is more to be done, but today, August 17, we take a first step. Please vote 'yes' on Amendment 3 to Senate Bill 3168."

Speaker Madigan: "The question is on the Amendment. Those in favor of the Amendment record themselves as 'aye'; those opposed by recording themselves as 'no'. Take the record. Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? The Clerk shall take the record. On this question, there are 54 'ayes' and 53 'noes'. And Mr. Reboletti, did you request a verification?"

Reboletti: "I'll withdraw my verification on the Amendment."

Speaker Madigan: "All right. So, there being 54 'ayes' and 53 'noes', the Amendment is adopted. Are there any further Amendments?"

Clerk Hollman: "No further Amendments. No Motions are filed."

Speaker Madigan: "Put the Bill on the Order of Third Reading. The Chair is prepared to adjourn the Special Session. Representative Currie moves that the Special Session adjourn to the call of the Speaker, pursuant to Special Session House Joint Resolution #1. Those in favor say 'aye'; those opposed say 'no'. In the opinion of the Chair, the 'ayes' have it. The Motion's adopted. The House now stands adjourned, pursuant to the call of the Chair."