

August 11, 2017

To the Honorable Members of  
The Illinois House of Representatives,  
100th General Assembly:

Today I veto House Bill 2496 from the 100th General Assembly, which will remove certain limitations on how members of the State Employee Retirement System can claim occupational disability benefits.

Current law puts reasonable limitations on claiming these benefits, including physician determinations of disability and application deadlines for claiming after the occurrence of disablement. Expanding the type of health care professionals who can make these determinations and removing the application deadlines as this legislation does creates unnecessary risk of abuse of these benefits.

Our pensions systems have been woefully underfunded for years due to politicians' overgenerous promises and a lack of real reform that would deliver better certainty to those who are owed benefits. This reality makes it imperative that we manage those funds to the best of our ability, not relax their regulation.

Individuals who are entitled to disability benefits deserve a commitment to careful stewardship of available benefits. Expanding opportunities for abuse of these systems risks shifting benefits away from those who need them the most.

Therefore, pursuant to Section 9(b) of Article IV of the Illinois Constitution of 1970, I hereby return House Bill 2496, entitled "AN ACT concerning public employee benefits", with the foregoing objections, vetoed in its entirety.

Sincerely,

Bruce Rauner  
GOVERNOR