

December 1, 2016

To the Honorable Members of  
The Illinois Senate,  
99th General Assembly:

Today I return Senate Bill 2822, which would give \$215,000,000 to Chicago Public Schools without having reached agreement on comprehensive pension reforms for the State and local governments.

In June we agreed on a six-month funding bridge to a balanced budget with structural and economic reforms. Democrat leaders were clear at that time that an agreement to end the budget impasse was not possible before the election. Although disappointed, we came together to fund schools and critical government operations until legislative leaders were willing to reengage in serious, good faith negotiations.

As a precondition to funding schools statewide, Democrats proposed a \$700 million State bailout of CPS. We eventually agreed to provide CPS with \$215,000,000 – the estimated amount of its Fiscal Year 2017 employer normal pension cost – but only if we came together to pass comprehensive pension reform. Without reforms to solve our structural problems, taxpayer money would continue to be wasted on bailout after bailout.

The agreement was clear: Republicans supported Senate Bill 2822 only on condition that Democrats reengage in serious, good faith negotiations; and President Cullerton and Leader Radogno filed motions to reconsider the bill, which would keep the bill in the General Assembly until a pension reform agreement was reached.

The election is over. Despite my repeated request for daily negotiations and hope to reach a comprehensive agreement by the end of next week, we are no closer to ending the impasse or enacting pension reform. Still, President Cullerton withdrew his motion to reconsider the bill, ruled that Leader Radogno's motion was inapplicable, and presented the bill to me for approval or veto – forcing me to take action. Then today, President Cullerton suddenly denied that the leaders had agreed that this bill would depend upon first enacting comprehensive pension reform. Breaking our agreement undermines our effort to end the budget impasse and enact reforms with bipartisan support.

The taxpayers of Illinois want a balanced budget. That can only be done if we address the structural imbalances that have bankrupted the State and CPS alike and drain resources that should be spent on other priorities, like improving schools and funding social services. The taxpayers of Illinois do not want just another bailout. Let's get back to work to end the budget impasse and put Illinois on the right track once and for all.

Therefore, pursuant to Section 9(b) of Article IV of the Illinois Constitution of 1970, I hereby return Senate Bill 2822 entitled "AN ACT concerning public employee benefits", with the foregoing objections, vetoed in its entirety.

Sincerely,

Bruce Rauner  
GOVERNOR