

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
93rd GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION  
SENATE TRANSCRIPT

1st Legislative Day

6/24/2004

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PRESIDENT JONES:

The Senate will please come to order. Will the Members please be at their desks? Will our guests in the galleries please rise? The invocation today will be given by the Reverend Jeff Chitwood, South Side Christian Church, Springfield.

THE REVEREND JEFF CHITWOOD:

(Prayer by the Reverend Jeff Chitwood)

PRESIDENT JONES:

Please remain standing for the Pledge of Allegiance. Senator Haine.

SENATOR HAINE:

(Pledge of Allegiance, led by Senator Haine)

PRESIDENT JONES:

Madam Secretary, Communication from the Secretary of State.

SECRETARY HAWKER:

June 23rd, 2004.

Dear Secretary Hawker - Enclosed please find a copy of Proclamation No. 2004-182, filed in my office on June 23rd, 2004, by Governor Rod R. Blagojevich, calling for a Special Session of the 93rd General Assembly, to begin at 2 o'clock p.m. on Thursday, June 23rd {sic}, 2004. A notice and -- accompanying Proclamation has been mailed today to each Member's Springfield office.

Sincerely, Jesse White, Secretary of State.

(Secretary reads Proclamation No. 04-182)

PRESIDENT JONES:

The Senate is convened in the First Special Session of the 93rd General Assembly. Under the practice of this Body since the 88th General Assembly, the rules adopted by the 93rd General Assembly and its officers and committees are in effect for the continuous period of the 93rd General Assembly, including the Special Session. There are three organizational resolutions that will be adopted today. These resolutions inform the House that the Senate is ready to conduct business, create a Senate Committee of five to await upon the Governor, to create a Senate Committee of three people to approve the Journals of the Senate for all days of the Special Session. Madam Secretary, Resolutions.

SECRETARY HAWKER:

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Senate Resolution 1, First Special Session, offered by Senator Welch.

(Secretary reads SR No. 1)

PRESIDENT JONES:

Senator Welch moves to suspend the rules for the purpose of immediate adoption of Senate Resolution 1. All those in favor, say -- say Aye. Opposed, Nay. The Ayes have it, and the rules are suspended. Senator Welch now moves for the adoption of Senate Resolution No. 1. Those in favor, signify by saying Aye. Opposed. The Ayes have it, and the resolution is adopted. Madam Secretary, Resolutions.

SECRETARY HAWKER:

Senate Resolution 2, First Special Session, offered by Senator Welch.

(Secretary reads SR No. 2)

PRESIDENT JONES:

Senator Welch moves to suspend the rules for the purpose of immediate adoption of Senate Resolution 2. All those in favor, signify by saying Aye. Opposed, Nay. The Ayes have it, and the rules are suspended. Senator Welch moves for the adoption of Senate Resolution 2. All those in favor, signify by saying Aye. Opposed, Nay. The Ayes have it, and the resolution is adopted. Madam Secretary, Resolutions.

SECRETARY HAWKER:

Senate Resolution 3, First Special Session, offered by Senator Welch.

(Secretary reads SR No. 3)

PRESIDENT JONES:

Senator Welch moves to suspend the rules for the purpose of the adoption of Senate Resolution No. 3. All those in favor, signify by saying Aye. Opposed, Nay. The Ayes have it, and the rules are suspended. Senator Welch now moves the adoption of Senate Resolution No. 3. Those in favor, signify by saying Aye. Opposed, Nay. The Ayes have it, and the resolution is adopted.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR WELCH)

Senator Welch is now in the Chair. Senator Geo-Karis, for what purpose do you seek recognition? Senator Geo-Karis.

SENATOR GEO-KARIS:

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Thank you, Mr. President and Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senate. We are being called into Special Session by our Governor and I hope that instead of his -- him blaming us all the time, I hope that he will work with the Legislative Leaders to get this budget done. This is ridiculous calling us in the middle of the week. And I can honestly tell you -- and I can honestly tell you it puts us in a -- kind of a bind, but we're here to do it -- the -- the business of the people. We'll be happy to do the business of the people, and Governor, I love you dearly, but please sit down with the Leaders and get it done.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR WELCH)

The Rules Committee will meet immediately in the Anteroom behind the Senate President's chair. Senate will stand at ease.

(SENATE STANDS AT EASE/SENATE RECONVENES)

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR WELCH)

Leave hasn't been granted yet for the press to take photos. The Senate will reconvene. Leave for taking photos has been requested by the Chicago Tribune staff photographer. WAND, WICS-TV and WMAQ-TV requests permission to videotape. Is there any objection? If not, leave is granted. Senator Jones, for what purpose do you rise?

SENATOR E. JONES:

Thank you, Mr. President. It's so good to see all these wonderful Members who are enjoying their great days here in Springfield. Shortly after I speak, I -- I -- I know we're going to have a caucus. I know Senator Watson, Minority Leader, will have a caucus. But to all of you, as to what has really been going on, we've been having meetings that we have been making some progress. And now that we are in Special Session and I believe that all the Members of this Chamber and the other Chamber should be here because the issues that we are discussing impact each and every Legislative District. Our job is to -- to get a budget for the next fiscal year. And since the -- since the budget impacts all of us and we are only about a fraction of a percent apart, less than two hundred million dollars out of a four-hundred-million-dollar budget. There have been times in the past that we've gone into overtime. And there is no need to

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listen to the unnecessary rhetoric coming from the opposite Chamber about preparing a budget, just a stopgap budget, in the event we do not have a budget. Our job should be here to get a budget passed which -- which would result in compromise if necessary in order to -- to do that. So I believe we should be here in Session. We should be here tomorrow. We should be here Monday. We should be here Tuesday, Saturday and Sunday if necessary. Because what decisions that are being made impact each and every one of you. And when you're less than two hundred million dollars off on the budget out of fifty-four-billion-dollar budget, it's not something that we cannot sit down and bring about a resolve. I -- I had a long meeting with the Minority Leader this morning and plan to meet with him again this afternoon to try to come to a resolve on many of the issues. There are many collateral issues that all of a sudden pops up as relate to the budget. And I feel they should not be part of that process. They should not be part of that process. But now they've been thrown into the picture. Many of those issues can be resolved within the Chamber itself. It's not -- should be a issue that would delay us really working on getting a budget passed. So my good friend, my Mediterranean cousin, I heard your remarks. But our -- the Governor has been negotiating in good faith. There has been compromise. Everyone must compromise. We are here to pass a FY'05 budget, not to prepare a budget in the event we do not get together. And I believe reasonable people can sit down and put a budget together. When you only talk about a fraction of a percent - a fraction of a percent - of fifty-four billion dollars we should be able to close that gap in the next few days and get the job done. I know in my own caucus we will discuss the issues that impact each and every Legislative District in the State of Illinois. And in doing so, you -- Senator Watson can speak for his own caucus. But in doing so, I think those decisions that we make, you should be here to help us make the right decision or have some input into those decisions. We are all elected, not to sit home and not be involved in the process. And each of the Leaders say, "We -- I got to take this back to my caucus." Well, then you'll be right here to discuss it with your Leaders. And that's why we should be in Special Session. I support the

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Special Session. We are elected - duly elected - to do the job. And so we should be here to get the job done. It is my intent to call regular Session tomorrow. Not send the Members home, because there is work that we have to do to get legislation in position to pass. And a Special Session should be called again tomorrow. I don't know about Saturday or Sunday, but whatever is necessary so that we can do our job of -- on this fraction of a percent on the budget. So we will be going to caucus when we adjourn this Session later today, but it's our intent to be back in Session tomorrow and any other day thereafter till we resolve this difference.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR WELCH)

Senator Watson.

SENATOR WATSON:

Yes. Thank you. Point of personal privilege.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR WELCH)

State your point.

SENATOR WATSON:

Thank you, Mr. President. And I -- I have to concur with the Senate President that we have been meeting regularly and -- and some progress has been made, I guess you'd have to say, but what we're all about on this side is that we're -- we want a budget that this State can afford. We want to be pro-job. We don't want to tax people out of this State and require them to take their jobs elsewhere or to limit the ability of this State to recover from the recession. Some of the issues that we've put on the table, we -- that we are very adamant about that have not necessarily been addressed to this point is the limit of spending that has gone on in this State, the borrowing that has gone on in this State and the manner in which it has. We've been negotiating, but no closure has been brought to that issue. We've -- we want to prioritize our spending. We think that's important. This caucus is all about prioritizing spending and it's in elementary/secondary education. It's in higher education and it's not necessarily in expanding Medicaid and create more and more availability and access to Medicaid to a population that even the federal government says is not necessarily eligible. We have expanded way past what the federal government has given us as the direction and the ability

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for us to fund. We don't necessarily need to go in that direction. If we want to prioritize spending and put it into education, this caucus will be with you. Special Session is a total, total waste of time, an irresponsible act by which twenty-four hours Members are demanded to be here in the Senate and the House Floor, and what do we do? We stand up and pontificate as we have done, as you just did, and I'm doing now. And what has been done as far as the benefit to the people of Illinois? Sixteen, seventeen thousand dollars a day it costs us to be here. It -- sure, it may be good for the people of Springfield. And I just heard they just raised the price of gasoline in Springfield, welcoming us back. Well, that's not what this ought to be all about. We are not two hundred million dollars apart. I'm sorry to say that. We are not two hundred million dollars apart. We are a great deal more than that. And we are not about -- we have compromised on this side of the aisle. I have compromised. I have -- I'm going to have to ask my caucus to compromise on principal issues that define us over on this side. And we're willing to do that when we prioritize and put the money where this State -- best benefits. We have kept our caucus notified. I don't know what other caucuses have done, but we've had telecommunication caucuses. Set up a conference call -- everybody can access. We explain what's going on. We give 'em an idea of where we are, what the -- what's going on in the -- in the Governor's meetings and the Leaders' meetings. We try to keep them informed best we can. We don't have to necessarily bring them to Springfield to get that job done. So we're willing, and if that's what you want to do, I understand that the Speaker has adjourned till Monday, but if that's what you want to do, this caucus will -- we'll do as we've always done. We'll do the responsible thing. We'll do the responsible thing. And we will sit, or we'll stand, or we'll do whatever we have to do to get this budget resolved and that is -- constantly -- constantly people think I want to go past July 1st. Why would I want to go past July... I want to do the responsible thing. Let's get this -- this -- let's get this resolved. We go into the meetings with the Governor, the four Leaders, et al, and what gets resolved, Mr. President? Not a great deal. We put issues on the table. Nothing's decided.

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Nothing's decided. But I'm willing to make the decisions. And I'm willing to make tough decisions, and this caucus will do the same thing. So let's get on with the people's business. But let's don't -- why waste money in the State of having everyone here and bringing everybody back into Session tomorrow to do what? Nothing.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR WELCH)

Senator Jones.

SENATOR E. JONES:

Thank you, Mr. President. And I do apologize for arising again. And when I indicate the differences that we find on the budget and that's how things change. All of a sudden we're way more than that. The responsible thing, I agree with the Minority Leader, is for us to be here and get the job done. If you want to get the job done by July 1, then the Members are going to have to be here. I don't think it's irresponsible for the Members not to be here. It's irresponsible to send the Members home when we still have a budget that we must pass. I and many Members do not want to balance the budget on the backs of the schoolchildren of Illinois or those who are in need of health care services. I don't intend to do that, when you have eighty percent of the school districts across the State that are on the financial watch list. There is means and ways with which we can resolve the budget, which means giving and taking for everyone. Give and take. But the responsible thing is to be here to get the job done, because if you got to take it back to the Members anyhow and let them make a decision, then why are we in the meeting? Maybe they should all be in the meeting. I will propose that we have another Leaders' meeting and all the Members who want to be there sit there and find out what their Leaders are talking about. That's -- all -- all -- all -- all the Members be there and I have...

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR WELCH)

Senator Watson. Please proceed.

SENATOR E. JONES:

Mr. Minority Leader, out of due respect I know you like to be in the theater-in-the-round and pontificate. I did not interfere with you. Give me my due respect. And perhaps the Members can see how foolish some of the issues that we are



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debating down there and -- as it relate to this fraction of a percent of the budget. But I'm quite sure reasonable men and women - and the people felt they elected reasonable men and women - can come to a resolve on this budget. Not unless -- unlike the other Chamber, perhaps they don't want to come to a resolve. That's why they held hearings last week saying, "Let's prepare a stopgap budget." We should be holding hearings to prepare a budget for the entire fiscal year that deal with all its agencies. So there has been compromise. There have been serious, serious cuts in this budget. So we'll go to our respective caucuses, but we'll be here tomorrow doing the responsible thing, and the responsible thing is to come together, pass a budget and let's get the heck out of Springfield.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR WELCH)

The Journal-Register requests leave to photograph. Without objection, leave is granted. Senator Sieben, for what purpose do you rise?

SENATOR SIEBEN:

Point of personal privilege, Mr...

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR WELCH)

State your point.

SENATOR SIEBEN:

I believe our Minority Leader got a little animated at the suggestion of the President of the Senate about opening these hearings up to the public, but I think that is an excellent idea. And if we want to let the public and the media be aware of what's going on with the Leaders' meeting, why not, at this point in the -- process, set up a table right in the Rotunda or on the second floor right below the press room with four chairs for the Legislative Leaders and for the Governor of the State of Illinois and make this a public process? Let's have transparency in this government. Let's let the public see what's going on in the negotiations to resolve this budget crisis. I would encourage the President of the Senate to follow through on that suggestion and invite those Leaders of the four caucuses, along with the Governor, to hold these meetings in public. Let the people see what the issues are.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR WELCH)

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Madam Secretary, Committee Reports.

SECRETARY HAWKER:

Senator Viverito, Chairman of the Committee on Rules, reports the following Legislative Measures have been assigned: Re-refer from Appropriations I to Rules Committee - Senate Bills 3232, 3233, 3241, 3243, 3257 and 3278; re-refer from Appropriations II to Rules Committee - Senate Bills 3242 and 3256.

Senator Viverito, Chairman of the Committee on Rules, reports the following Legislative Measures have been assigned: Be Approved for Consideration - Senate Bills 3232, 3233, 3241, 3242, 3243, 3256, 3257 and 3278.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR WELCH)

Senator Halvorson, for what purpose do you seek recognition?

SENATOR HALVORSON:

Thank you, Mr. President. For an announcement.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR WELCH)

Please state your announcement.

SENATOR HALVORSON:

I'd like to announce that there will be a Democrat Caucus in Senator Jones' Office immediately upon adjournment, recess. Upon recess.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR WELCH)

Senator Burzynski, for what purpose do you seek recognition?

SENATOR BURZYNSKI:

Thank you, Mr. President. We would request a Republican Caucus immediately upon recess, adjournment, whatever you'd like to do today, in Senator Watson's Office.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR WELCH)

The Senate will stand in recess until the call of the Chair. Senate stands in recess. Senator Burzynski.

SENATOR BURZYNSKI:

Thank you. Mr. President, just for the information of the Members. Do we anticipate coming back in this evening, this afternoon, or are we talking about call of the Chair conceivably until tomorrow at some point?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR WELCH)

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Senator Burzynski, -- we will be coming back perhaps only for -- for other announcements concerning our schedule. There'll be no votes taken and no Floor action. Senator Burzynski.

SENATOR BURZYNSKI:

Thank you for that clarification, Mr. President. Just one other question as a follow-up to that. Do we anticipate then potentially tomorrow morning being in or tomorrow afternoon? And just to only -- I know that some of our Members are close enough they might be able to -- to do something a little bit different tonight than those of us that are a little farther away, like go home.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR WELCH)

Senator Jones.

SENATOR E. JONES:

In -- in response to that question, it'll be later in the afternoon, not early in the morning. Unless -- I plan to meet with your Leader and we can conduct some meaningful discussion without the theatrics, we may come in in the morning. But it -- the plan is to come in in the afternoon.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR WELCH)

Senator Viverito.

SENATOR VIVERITO:

Point of personal privilege.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR WELCH)

State your point.

SENATOR VIVERITO:

Something on a little bit of a little lighter side. Something that we should be very proud of. Our colleague, Senator Marty Sandoval, has twins and his son -- or -- no, the daughter was the Valedictorian of her class. How about a nice round of applause for...

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR WELCH)

Congratulations, Senator. Senator Mattie Hunter.

SENATOR HUNTER:

Thank you, Mr. President. For the past several months our Sergeant-at-Arms, Anita, has been out ill. And today is her first day back. And we missed you so, so much, Anita. So I'd like to welcome you back from all of -- all of my colleagues

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here at the Senate, and to also thank Heather for being a very, very strong number two person. Will you please welcome Anita back to the Senate?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR WELCH)

Welcome back, Anita. The Senate will stand in recess.

(SENATE STANDS IN RECESS/SENATE RECONVENES)

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR WELCH)

The First General -- the First Special Session of the 93rd General Assembly will come to order. For purposes of announcement: The regular Session of the 93rd General Assembly will convene at 11 o'clock a.m. tomorrow - 11 o'clock a.m. on Friday. And at 12 o'clock noon tomorrow, pursuant to the Governor's proclamation, the Second Special Session of the 93rd General Assembly will convene at 12 o'clock noon. The current Session that we're in right now, the First Special Session of the 93rd General Assembly, will adjourn until 11:45 a.m. tomorrow morning. There being no further business to come before the Senate, the First Special Session of the 93rd General Assembly is adjourned.