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“Kids Don’t Have Lobbyists: Part I” is Latest Installment of Thanks in Advance Campaign

CHICAGO - December 11, 2012. The impact of the pension squeeze on future generations of Illinois children is the focus of a new video posted today as part of Governor Quinn’s “Thanks in Advance” Internet campaign to educate Illinoisans about the urgent need for pension reform. A two-part video - “Kids Don’t Have Lobbyists: Part I” - goes behind-the-scenes at a children’s focus group about breakfast cereal which turns into a serious discussion of pension reform. As the gravity of the pension problem becomes clear and the kids realize their voices are not always heard, they decide to hire a lobbyist.

View the first part of the “Kids Don’t Have Lobbyists” video at ThisIsMyIllinois.com or the “Thanks in Advance”
Facebook page
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“Nobody has more at stake in fixing the pension problem than the children of Illinois," Governor Quinn said. “In the past decade, the pension squeeze has forced lawmakers to make deep cuts in early childhood education, after-school programs and grants for college-bound students. Tomorrow’s children face a difficult future unless we act responsibly to ease the pension squeeze.”

According to the Governor’s Office of Management and Budget, state spending on public pensions is projected to exceed education spending by 2016. The state's pension payments - which made up just 6 percent of the state’s budget in 2008 - have soared to 16 percent of the budget in 2013. That increase has “squeezed” the education portion of the budget from 30 percent down to 26 percent. The “squeeze” by pension payments on essential state services is the focus of “Thanks in Advance,” which has attracted more than 30,000 unique visitors since its launch to the website.

The “Kids Don’t Have Lobbyists: Part I” video joins three videos on the “Thanks in Advance”

website, including one launch video and two videos by legendary “explainer” and founder of the Khan Academy, Salman Khan. Khan was named by Time Magazine as one of the World’s 100 Most Influential People for his commitment to offering a “world class education for everyone everywhere”. Part II will be launched in the coming days.

In April, Governor Quinn proposed a plan that would rescue the pension systems, ensure employees have access to benefits and prevent skyrocketing pension costs from eating up core services like education and healthcare. The governor's plan would fully fund the pension system by 2042. "Thanks in Advance" aims to build public awareness about the need for legislative action on pension reform in Springfield and empower citizens to make their voices heard. The legislature is scheduled to work January 3 - 8.

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