

## Governor Quinn Suspends Pay to Illinois Representatives and Senators

Written by Brooke Anderson  
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CHICAGO - Governor Pat Quinn today issued a line-item veto of House Bill 214 to suspend pay for Illinois state legislators. Since taking office, the governor has been pushing for comprehensive pension reform to resolve the state's worst-in-the-nation pension crisis. Today's action follows years of legislative inertia on pension reform, while the state's unfunded pension debt grows by millions of dollars a day.

"In this budget, there should be no paychecks for legislators until they get the job done on pension reform," Governor Quinn said. "Pension reform is the most critical job for all of us in public office. I cannot in good conscience approve legislation that provides paychecks to legislators who are not doing their job for the taxpayers."

In addition, Governor Quinn will not accept his salary until the General Assembly sends him a comprehensive pension reform solution.

Illinois' pension crisis was created over 70 years of fiscal mismanagement by previous governors and legislatures. Since taking office, Governor Quinn has worked to restore fiscal stability to the state, making the full pension payment each year and reducing the state's discretionary spending to historic lows. Governor Quinn's efforts to enact pension reform include:

- In May 2009, Governor Quinn established the Pension Modernization Task Force, which laid the foundation for pension reform efforts.

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- In 2010, despite intense opposition, he fought for and signed into law sweeping pension reform for new hires that are saving billions of dollars.
- In January 2012, the governor convened a legislative pension reform working group to develop a solution.
- Three months later, he proposed a comprehensive pension reform plan that erased the unfunded liability and worked to pass this legislation during the legislative session.
- To avoid credit downgrades, Governor Quinn set several deadlines over the past two years for legislators to enact pension reform. Each time the deadline was blown, taxpayers were on the hook for millions of more dollars in pension debt and numerous downgrades to the state's credit rating. Recently, Illinois' credit rating was downgraded twice in one week to its lowest point in history, which days ago cost taxpayers an additional \$130 million over the life of the bonds, in order to maintain critical infrastructure.
- The governor has called special sessions to address pension reform.
- He has released several studies on the dire impact of pension inaction on education, with Illinois currently on track to spend more on pensions than education by 2016.
- The governor has met at length, numerous times with legislative leaders and lawmakers, and repeatedly asked them to vote for comprehensive pension reform.
- Governor Quinn launched an online campaign to raise awareness about the pension squeeze and urgent need for action.
- The governor has rejected piecemeal and insufficient pension bills that did not eliminate the

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pension debt.

- During his 2013 State of the State and Budget addresses, the governor again laid out standards for pension reform and throughout the session he pushed for Senate Bill 1, which would have eliminated the unfunded liability.
- In June 2013, the governor proposed a legislative conference committee as a vehicle to break gridlock between the two chambers. He asked the legislative conference committee to act on a compromise that erases the unfunded liability and provides 100 percent funding for the systems by July 9.

Members of the Illinois General Assembly make \$67,836 annually, along with additional stipends for leadership positions, both of which were vetoed out today.

"This is an emergency, the taxpayers of Illinois are waiting and there is no excuse for further legislative delay," Governor Quinn added. "The taxpayers cannot afford an endless cycle of delays, excuses and more delays."

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