

Governor Quinn Signs Legislation Reducing Legislators' Compensation

Written by Leslie Wertheimer
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Law instates furlough days, prohibits cost-of-living adjustments

CHICAGO – June 29, 2012. Governor Pat Quinn today signed a new law to help close Illinois' budget deficit by reducing state legislators' compensation. HB 3188 will instate furlough days and prohibit cost of living adjustments for legislators. Governor Quinn cut his own budget by nine percent this year. This is the fourth consecutive year the Illinois General Assembly has voted to cut its own salaries.

"We must continue our work to restore fiscal stability to Illinois," Governor Quinn said. "Members of the General Assembly made the right decision to cut their own paycheck and share some of the burden that working families are facing around the state."

HB 3188, sponsored by Rep. Robyn Gabel (D-Evanston) and Sen. Dan Kotowski (D-Mount Prospect), was introduced to the General Assembly as a cost saving measure. Under this law, legislators will have 12 furlough days a year, forfeiting one day of compensation each month during the first 6 months and second 6 months of the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2012. These furloughs are equivalent to a nearly five percent pay cut, which is just over \$3,000.

"This eliminates an unnecessary perk for politicians when everybody else in the state of Illinois

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has had to tighten their belts and do more with less," said Sen. Kotowski. "Thank you Governor Quinn for signing this legislation and taking another important step to changing business as usual in Springfield."

"As we hear from our constituents, people are struggling to do more with less," said Rep. Gabel. "And I feel it is important for the legislature to do the same."

The law also prohibits a fiscal year 2013 cost-of-living adjustment for lawmakers. This means that legislators' salaries for the upcoming fiscal year will not be increased to offset the effects of inflation.

After inheriting a budget deficit from decades of fiscal mismanagement by previous governors and legislatures, Governor Quinn has taken many key steps to restore fiscal stability to Illinois. The governor has reduced discretionary spending to below FY 2008 levels, and recently implemented new laws to reduce the Medicaid liability by \$2.7B and save the program from collapse. HB 3188 is yet another cost-cutting measure that is projected to save the state around \$1 million.

The law is effective immediately.

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