

February 6, 2015



ALLIANCE LEGISLATIVE REPORT (99-3)

GOVERNOR DELIVERS FIRST STATE MESSAGE

In his first State of the State Address to a joint session of the Illinois General Assembly, **Governor Bruce Rauner** outlined his “Illinois Turnaround” plan to begin a State economic recovery. Armed with a long list of potential reforms, the Governor still has some work to do to provide details of his initiatives and to garner the necessary support from a legislature that is controlled by the opposite political party.

His list contains provisions for reform of taxation, the business climate, K-12 education and the Illinois Constitution. To read his entire agenda, please go to:

<http://www.iasb.com/govrel/GovernorRaunerPolicyAgenda.pdf>. Here are a few highlights:

- Increase State support for pre-K-12 education
- Expand access to high-quality early childhood education
- Launch an effort to increase parent participation in the classroom
- Give local school boards the ability to modify overly burdensome unfunded mandates
- Lift the arbitrary cap on public charter schools
- Reform teacher tenure and incentivize local school districts to reward high-performing administrators and teachers
- Improve teacher recruitment
- Eliminate unnecessary testing and institute a rigorous K-12 student growth measure
- Expand vocational and technical program resources
- Pass a phased in minimum wage increase of 25 cents per year for seven years
- Implement true workers’ compensation reform legislation
- Enact lawsuit reforms to prevent unreasonable “venue shopping” and improve medical malpractice laws
- Make Illinois unemployment insurance fair for beneficiaries and employers
- Implement true competitive bidding in public works projects and limit prevailing wage requirements and eliminate project labor agreements
- Create local employee “empowerment zones” regarding union contracts
- Make income taxes low and competitive
- Freeze property taxes for two years
- Modernize the sales tax to include service taxes
- Protect historically accrued State pension benefits for retirees and current workers while moving all current workers into the Tier 2 pension plan and/or a 401K
- Pursue permanent pension relief through a constitutional amendment
- Empower government employees to decide for themselves whether or not to join a union

SENATE APPROVES MINIMUM WAGE HIKE

Moving at an unusually fast pace for the Illinois legislature, the Senate Thursday approved a bill to increase the State's minimum wage. This will give the House of Representatives nearly four months to study and debate the proposal, something the Senate sponsor said should help yield a better result for her issue. **Senator Kimberly Lightford (D-Maywood)** stated that some House members last year claimed that their chamber did not have enough time to consider her minimum wage proposal.

SB 11 increases the minimum wage to \$9 per hour starting on July 1, 2015, and eventually to \$11 per hour in 2019. Governor Rauner's proposal would increase the minimum wage to \$10 per hour over seven years.

In the Senate, the bill was approved on a vote of 35-18-1 with only Democrats voting in favor of the bill. Democrats also have an extraordinary majority in the House of Representatives so the measure could be sent to the Governor with no Republican support.

This legislative report was written and edited by the lobbyists of the Illinois Association of School Boards to provide information to the members of the organizations that comprise the Statewide School Management Alliance.

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