



A Union of Professionals

1274 Newsline



North Suburban Teachers Union – Local 1274, CFL, IFT/AFT, AFL-CIO

March 2014

Primary Challenge: Getting Into the Game

As the March 18th primary approaches, the highest stakes are in the selection of a Republican candidate to oppose Governor Pat Quinn in November.

On March 2nd, the IFT announced its endorsement of State Senator Kirk Dillard in the primary. “This election is simply too important to stand on the sidelines and we are getting into the game for the future of Illinois,” said Dan Montgomery, President of the IFT.

Senator Dillard has been a strong supporter of public education and teachers. His father was a teacher, he attended public schools and a public university, and his two daughters have also attended public schools. He cast a tough vote against SB 1 - the pension-slashing bill - because he believes that it is unconstitutional. Dillard has also been endorsed by the IEA, our state’s other major union representing teachers in Illinois.

Dillard’s positions on pensions stand in stark contrast to the current front-runner for the Republican nomination, Bruce Rauner, who has called public employee pensions “stunningly generous” and says that retirees will get “higher pay for the rest of their lives than they got while working.” He blames unions and “union bosses” for the state’s fiscal problems. If elected, we can fully expect attacks on unions on a par with those of Scott Walker in Wisconsin.



“We encourage anyone who plans to pull a Republican ballot on March 18th to vote for Kirk Dillard.” - Dan Montgomery, IFT President

In addition, the IFT has handed its endorsement to two other statewide candidates: Mike Frerichs for State Treasurer and Judy Baar Topinka for Comptroller.

Frerichs, currently a state senator from Champaign-Urbana, voted no on SB 1. “I will not support any legislation that unfairly punishes our seniors for simply doing what was required of them while the state of Illinois failed to live up to their end of the bargain.” Frerichs, whose father is a

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Above are the three candidates recommended by the IFT in statewide primary races. At the top is Kirk Dillard, running as a Republican for governor. On the right is Mike Frerichs, running as a Democrat for Treasurer, and below is Judy Baar Topinka, running for re-election as Comptroller.

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10 Things You Should Know About Bruce Rauner

Steve Grossman: Sailing on Troubled Political Waters

10 Things Everyone Should Know About Bruce Rauner

➔ **Just like Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker, Rauner wants to dismantle unions and eliminate pension benefits, but happily reaped huge profits by investing YOUR retirement savings.** Rauner made millions by managing pension funds for the Illinois Teachers' Retirement System, as co-founder and former chairman of Chicago's second largest private equity fund (GTCR).

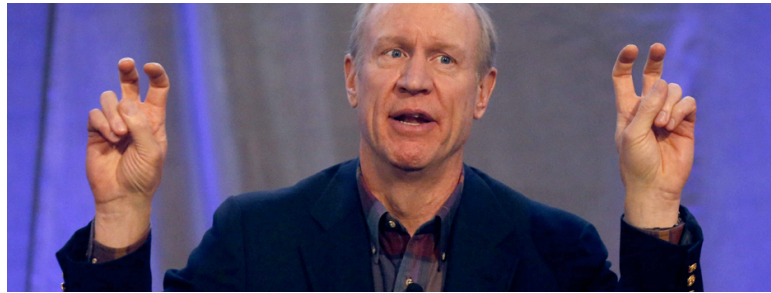
➔ **Rauner says he'd "shake up" Springfield, but he's tied to those who shook it down.** Rauner's firm owned part of CompBenefits, a company that paid \$1 million to convicted felon Stuart Levine to get city and state contracts, using bribes if necessary. While on the board of the Illinois teachers pension fund, Levine voted to award Rauner's firm a \$50 million contract to manage the fund.

➔ **Rauner earns \$25,000 an HOUR but called for *lowering* the minimum wage to \$7.25.** As soon as the media exposed this comment, the billionaire scrambled to explain his indefensible position, but more video had already surfaced of him saying he was "adamantly, adamantly" opposed to an increase.

➔ **Rauner brags about his "average Joe" Carhartt jacket and \$18 watch, but he's no regular guy underneath the costume.** The billionaire owns NINE million dollar homes, including a mansion in Winnetka, two upscale properties in Chicago, and a penthouse in New York City.

➔ **Rauner insists he's a political "outsider," but he played a major role in attempts to dismantle public education.** Rauner encouraged Jonah Edelman and his "educational reform group" – Stand for Children – to come to Illinois. The group and its wealthy funders like Rauner bragged about "outfoxing the teachers' unions" and pushed for reforms that would have eliminated collective bargaining and Chicago teachers' right to strike in 2012.

➔ **Rauner pulled strings and got his daughter into an elite public school in Chicago after her application was rejected.** He personally called then-Chicago schools CEO Arne Duncan to make sure that she was offered one of only 300 spots at Walter Payton College Prep, leapfrogging over 7,000 city applicants. Rauner donated \$250,000 to Payton Prep a year later. Rauner lives in wealthy suburban Winnetka, not Chicago.



➔ **Rauner invested in nursing homes that dramatically cut costs for profit, resulting in wrongful death and patient-neglect lawsuits** that at one point totaled more than \$2.3 billion. After Rauner's firm GTCR bought Trans Healthcare Inc, the now-bankrupt nursing home chain was sued at least a half dozen times by patients and their families for failing to provide proper funding for care.

➔ **Rauner sharply criticizes "pay-to-play" politics, but received millions in state business after donating \$300,000 to former Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell during his campaign.** Rauner's firm was managing state pension funds at the time, a clear conflict of interest. After Rendell was elected, the state doubled its stake in GTCR funds, resulting in an additional \$4 million profit for Rauner. And he has the nerve to accuse union members of bribery?

➔ **Rauner loves to bash Democrats, but fails to mention that he's a big supporter of Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, his close friend and a sharp critic of the Chicago Teachers Union.** While working with Rauner in the late '90s, Emanuel made \$18 million, which helped him run for elective office.

➔ **Rauner supports "right-to-work" laws that would rob you of your rights to form unions and advocate for the students and citizens you serve.** These laws also drive down wages, benefits, and the overall standard of living for anyone outside of Rauner's 1%, who stand to get richer as the income inequality gap widens.

Billionaire Bruce Rauner has already contributed more than \$3 million of his own money to his campaign, with several wealthy friends casually chipping in six-figures and more to come. He is trying to determine the outcome of this election the only way he knows how: by buying it. Rauner is saturating the airwaves with deceptive commercials, hoping you won't read or share these facts. Spread the word today.



Strange Bedfellows

As the saying goes, politics does indeed make for strange bedfellows.

The difficult nature of the political landscape in Illinois heading into the March 18th primary election is highlighted by the IFT's recent endorsement of Republican candidates in two statewide races - Judy Baar Topinka for Comptroller and State Senator Kirk Dillard in the Republican primary for governor - while withholding its endorsement of Democratic candidates for offices across the state, including the Democratic primary race for governor that features incumbent Pat Quinn. Similarly, the IFT offers no endorsement in most of the Illinois House and Senate districts within our Local's boundaries.

On the one hand, the lack of endorsements might seem merely symbolic. After all, in most of those races the incumbent is running unopposed or, as is the case with Quinn, without meaningful opposition. On the other hand, the situation speaks to troubling political times in which even our supposed friends have betrayed us on some of our most important issues – most significantly by voting in favor of the pension theft bill known as SB1.

There is no doubt that as we move forward towards the November general election and beyond, our Democratic “friends”, trying to get back into our good graces, will point out that they have supported our positions on most other issues and should be forgiven their one transgression.

But we made clear to those legislators the importance of the pension issue throughout what has been a battle lasting years. We even offered them a negotiated solution representing real sacrifices from our members that the House leadership refused to even call for a vote. Aside from deeply harming the livelihood of hundreds of thousands of public workers and retirees, those who voted for



SB1 stood on the wrong side on an issue of fundamental fairness and constitutional rights.

That said, as we look ahead there are many other issues for which we will need legislative and political support: proper funding for education (pre-K through higher education) and other vital social services; adequate revenue to fund those services; fair taxation; maintaining workers' rights to organize and have a voice in the workplace; rolling back the privatization of public schools and other institutions; and the list goes on. And if the courts find SB1 unconstitutional, we will need to build support for a new and fair legislative solution.

We will have some tough choices to make in the general election this fall. In the meantime, for the primaries, we will throw our support behind the few who stood behind us when the pressure was on.

Betrayed as we may have been by some of our Democratic “friends” on SB1, the base of the Republican Party has never been on our side on any of the issues listed above. And we cannot forget that most Republicans voted against SB1 because they believed that it did not cut enough out of our pensions. In fact, Bruce Rauner's position is to eliminate entirely all defined benefit public pensions and replace them with the 401k plans that have killed private sector pensions.

So we will have some tough choices to make in the general election this fall. In the meantime, for the primaries, we will throw our support behind the few who stood behind us when the pressure was on. That includes Comptroller Judy Baar Topinka, who was the lone statewide officer to publicly oppose SB1 while endorsing SB2404, the alternative negotiated with the labor unions. In the race for Governor, State Senator Kirk Dillard offers Republican voters a real alternative to the threat of Bruce Rauner – and may even represent a viable option to Quinn in the general election if he makes it that far.

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Steve", written in a cursive style.



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Teamster truck driver and mother a retired AFSCME secretary, is abashedly pro-union. "My parents and family members are proud union members and I will never forget what Labor does for them and other working families every day." Frerichs is running unopposed in the Democratic primary for State Treasurer.

Judy Baar Topinka has been Illinois Comptroller since 2011. In the run-up to passage of the pension bill, she was an advocate for fairness in pension reform. She came out publicly in support of the union-backed bill (SB 2404) and urged Speaker Madigan to call it for a vote.

The IFT takes its endorsements seriously, and the process is painstaking. Incumbents are rated based on their voting records and all candidates are vetted based on interviews and questionnaires. Representatives from IFT locals across the state are involved in discussions and votes leading to endorsement. For a list of IFT endorsements, go to www.ift-aft.org.

While we have a long history of bipartisanship, this is a significant moment for the IFT. Other than our support for Jim Thompson, this is only the second time in our history when we have endorsed a Republican candidate for Governor.

Pension Lawsuit Filed

On January 28th, the We Are One Illinois Coalition filed a lawsuit on behalf of a group of active and retired public employees at the Sangamon County Circuit Court in Springfield. The suit seeks to overturn the pension-slashing Senate Bill 1.



The suit argues that the "pension theft" law violates the pension clause of the Illinois Constitution, which unequivocally states that a public employee's pension is a contract that the state cannot diminish or impair.

Defendants in the lawsuit are Governor Pat Quinn, other constitutional officers, the state retirement systems and their boards.

To read the full complaint, go to:

http://www.weareoneillinois.org/WeAreOneIllinois_Complaint.pdf

Notice of Union Elections and Nomination Procedures

On May 13, 2014 elections will be held for the following union positions:

- The offices of **President, Vice President, and Treasurer** of the **North Suburban Teachers Union, IFT-AFT Local 1274**.
- **Delegates to the Convention of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT)** from Local 1274. The Local will send up to twelve (12) delegates. If more than 12 candidates are nominated, the 12 receiving the greatest number of votes will serve as delegates, and the rest will be considered as alternates. If 12 or fewer nominations are received, those candidates will qualify to serve as delegates without an election.

If you wish to run to serve as a Local Officer, or as an AFT CONVENTION DELEGATE, you must present a completed petition, signed by no fewer than 15 members in good standing, to THE OFFICES OF THE NORTH SUBURBAN TEACHERS UNION no later than 4:00 PM on April 15, 2014.

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