



News from
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Coladipietro Urges Speaker Madigan to Schedule Vote on Economic Reform

Citizens and Third Party Groups Demand Action on Spending and Accountability Measures

SPRINGFIELD – State Representative Franco Coladipietro (R-Bloomington) along with his House Republican colleagues and the Illinois Policy Institute are urging Speaker Madigan to schedule a vote on a comprehensive economic agenda that would rein in spending and inject transparency and accountability into the state budget.

“With the Democrat leaders in this state looking to raise taxes on everything from your income to purchasing gasoline, it’s imperative that the state first incorporate major reforms to rein in spending and make the leaders accountable for every tax dollar spent,” said Rep. Coladipietro. “It’s completely unacceptable and inexcusable for the Democrats to propose a budget that increases spending by 6.6% and increases the income tax on the working class families by 50%.”

“Recently, thousands of frustrated taxpayers participated in tax day tea parties across the state demanding transparency, accountability and curtailing runaway spending in our state,” said House Republican Leader Tom Cross. “A vote on the economic reform agenda would send a message to those taxpayers that Springfield is listening.”

On March 11, House Republicans and the Illinois Policy Institute announced a four point economic reform agenda that would increase accountability and performance from state programs, responsible state spending and holding the line on taxes.

“Over the last six years, we have seen state spending grow by over \$6 billion,” said Cross. “We need to implement some accountability and responsibility to begin holding the line on both taxes and spending.”

“This economic reform agenda represents the most comprehensive attempt to provide Illinois taxpayers and businesses relief from the lack of accountability and runaway spending that has become commonplace in our state,” said John Tillman, CEO, Illinois Policy Institute. “The failed policies of increased spending and higher taxes have led us to one of the most inefficient and worst performing economies in the nation, and with every passing day the leaders in Springfield continue to fail us.”

A vote on the following four point economic reform agenda will be crucial in ensuring the transparency, and accountability of the government while simultaneously eliminating its waste, fraud, and abuse of the

state budget. Currently, only one bill from the package has even been assigned to a committee hearing (HJR 19-Stimulus Watch).

Establish an Illinois Sunshine Commission – In 2007, the Auditor General issued a report indicating that the State of Illinois “...does not have a comprehensive, consistent inventory of programs” it funds on a daily basis. This report reveals that the state government is so unorganized and inefficient that a roster of state programs does not exist. The Sunshine Act (HB 4134) will create an independent commission of business leaders that will make specific recommendations to consolidate or eliminate duplicative or ineffective programs. The General Assembly must vote up or down on the total recommendation and is modeled on the very successful Base Realignment and Closing Commission that worked so well to scale down the Department of Defense.

Enact “Pay As You Go” Spending - HB 3189 (PAYGO) requires elected officials to set priorities and make hard choices on what spending programs should go forward and which ones should be discontinued. To add a new spending program, one must offset that spending by eliminating an existing program to “pay” for the proposal. Every day, Illinois families have to balance their spending decisions so should the state government.

Supermajority vote to raise taxes and fees - HRJCA 28 requires a 3/5 supermajority vote on any legislation that would raise taxes or fees on Illinois families or businesses. Since 1998, state spending is up 45% (inflation adjusted to 2008 dollars) while population is only up 4%. In simple terms, our state government now spends \$4,700 per person while in 1998 spent \$3,200 per person.

The Stimulus Watch Act - HJR 19 requires that the Governor cannot use any funds from the federal stimulus package unless the program is created and appropriated by the General Assembly. Further, any new programs begun as part of stimulus funding must sunset when stimulus funds are no longer available. This Act will prevent excessive upward pressure on spending when future revenue sources are uncertain or unavailable.

“This package of bills is common sense. It makes government open and transparent to the taxpayer and more importantly it reigns in the state’s out of control spending,” said Rep. Coladipietro. “In this current economic climate, the worst thing the state can do is try and balance the budget on the backs of the working class.”

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