

TUA NEWS RELEASE

TAXPAYERS UNITED OF AMERICA

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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IL Gov. Rauner Strikes at the Root of Evil in Second Budget Address

Chicago—Illinois Gov. Bruce Rauner delivered his second budget address before the General Assembly today, giving the first-term Republican another prominent opportunity to outline his plans for resolving Illinois' protracted budget impasse by implementing structural reforms to the state government.

Taxpayers United of America's (TUA) director of operations, Jared Labell, said that "Rauner is correctly imploring the Illinois General Assembly to immediately pass a balanced budget for the good of all Illinois residents and taxpayers."

"Gov. Rauner's address lacked the flowery campaign rhetoric from just one year ago, due in large part to the severity of the financial catastrophe the state is currently facing, and after decades of predictable governmental mismanagement. Rauner is absolutely right in his assessment that the only fiscally sound path forward for Illinois is for the legislature to pass economic and governmental reforms, while negotiating spending reductions and revenue concerns," said Labell.

"Rauner must also be praised for standing firm and allowing the Illinois state income tax to fall by twenty-five percent when he first took office in January 2015, sunsetting a portion of the 2011 sixty-seven percent income tax hike imposed by former governor – and incessant political hack – Pat Quinn (D)," said Labell. "The state income tax is an economically crippling juggernaut and we are glad to hear that Rauner is not considering hiking it now or supporting a new state income tax on retirement income at this time."

"I won't support new revenue unless we have major structural reforms to grow more jobs and get more value for taxpayers. I'm insisting that we attack the root causes of our dismal economic performance," Rauner remarked early in his budget address. He explained further, "Those are the dynamics."

"That leaves us with only two choices: either you give the executive branch the authority to cut spending to live within our revenues. Or, we agree – together – on economic and governmental reforms, to accompany a negotiated balance of spending reductions and revenue that ensures that Illinois can be both compassionate and competitive. You choose. But please, choose now," added Rauner.

"Attacking the root of Illinois' atrocious economic reality is right on target. Taxpayers United of America will provide further analysis of the proposed budget, and the certain ongoing battle in the Illinois General Assembly, in the coming days and weeks," said Labell. "Rauner makes a point that is reminiscent of a passage from Henry David Thoreau's *Walden*, which taxpayers would be wise to emulate. 'There are a thousand hacking at the branches of evil to one who is striking at the root.'"

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“It is our duty, as long as we must toil under this government, to stand up for our lives, liberty, and property, ensuring that the government does not grow to be destructive of those ends. This is a start, but the fight is far from over,” concluded Labell.