

TUA NEWS RELEASE

TAXPAYERS UNITED OF AMERICA

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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The Ruling Class: Judges' Retirement System

CHICAGO—**Taxpayers United of America (TUA)** today released the results of their updated analysis of the Judges' Retirement System (JRS) of Illinois.

“There’s no question that Illinois has an elite, ruling class that is made wealthy on the backs of the hard-working middle class,” stated Jim Tobin, TUA president.

“Our analysis of JRS reveals more of the same taxpayer abuse that we have found across the state’s government pension system. Not only do these judges benefit from the redistribution of taxpayer wealth, they also rule in their own favor to protect the Illinois pension cabal when practical, necessary reforms are challenged in the courts.”

“This system is ripe with conflicts of interest and corruption and it is protected at every level of a government that chooses to serve itself rather than the constituents it was intended to protect. The following facts about JRS should dispel the myth that the system is fair and that taxpayers need to further subsidize this mess,” added Tobin.

- The average JRS pension is \$117,473
- The average years of service are 18
- The average age of retirement is 62
- Total number of JRS pension beneficiaries is approximately 1,121
- 751, or 67%, collect pensions in excess of \$100,000
- 1,011, or 90% of retired judges, collect pensions in excess of \$50,000
- The average amount that employees paid to their own pension fund is \$124,387, or 4.5% of their estimated lifetime government pension payout
- The average estimated lifetime government pension payout is \$2.8 million*
- In fiscal year 2015, forced taxpayer subsidies to the fund were \$134,039,684 or 90% of total contributions
- In fiscal year 2015, judges’ payments to their own pension fund was \$15,431,105
- As of the end of fiscal year 2015, JRS had a 35.4% funded ratio with a \$1.5 billion unfunded liability

“It is unconscionable that any educated person could actually defend this system and not strike it down for what it is – a grab for taxpayers’ wallets to fund the political elite ruling class of Illinois.”

“As our data indicates, taxpayers have already paid more than their fair share of retirement benefits for these ‘poor civil servants,’ but these very judges have ruled that taxpayers must pay again and again for the mismanagement and unrealistic promises made so many years ago.”

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“**Tobias G. Barry** remains at the top of our list with a very lucrative **\$210,205 annual pension** benefit! The lifetime accumulation of those payments will reach a cool **\$2.5 million**. His payments to that gold-plated pension were only \$171,583.”

“**Sheila M. O’Brien** tops the list for estimated lifetime payouts. Retiring at only 55, she could realize more than \$7.9 million in taxpayer funded pension benefits. Her current annual payment is a very comfortable \$192,039.”

“Perhaps you remember **Peg M. Breslin** from our recent General Assembly Retirement System (GARS) analysis. Her annual **GARS pension is \$112,754**. She also graces the JRS list of pensioners with a **second annual pension of \$73,182**. Her total lifetime estimated payout could top **\$5.4 million**. This poor civil servant had to work well into her fifties (56) to enjoy this loophole we like to call double-dipping!”

- [Click here to see the complete list of JRS pensioners](#)

“Although JRS has been stealing taxpayer wealth since 1941, the really lavish payouts can be attributed to the efforts of Democrat Speaker of the Illinois House, Michael J. Madigan, who has plagued Illinois taxpayers for forty-five years and should be thrown out of office in the March 15 Illinois primary. The ever powerful Boss Madigan has supported and promoted the passage of legislation to make these government pensions so very lucrative,” charged Tobin.

“It’s time for the elite political ruling class of Illinois to do what is right for taxpayers and to quit padding their bank accounts with the sweat of the working-class. It’s time for Boss Madigan and these judges to make government pension reform a reality,” concluded Tobin.

*Lifetime estimated pension payout includes 3% compounded COLA and assumes life expectancy of 85 (IRS Form 590).