

TEF NEWS RELEASE

Taxpayer Education Foundation

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STATE PENSIONS FATTEN WALLETS OF RETIRED ILLINOIS POLITICIANS

[Top 200 GARS Pensions](#)

Retired Illinois politicians have become pension millionaires and are getting richer by the day, while Illinois taxpayers lose their jobs, get behind on their mortgages and have trouble paying their bills, according to the most recent study of state pensions by the Taxpayer Education Foundation (TEF).

“These bloodsuckers that raised state taxes billions of dollars, and then retired, are getting lavish, gold-plated pensions and benefits,” said James L. Tobin, economist and TEF president. “Their functionally-bankrupt state pension plan, the General Assembly Retirement System (GARS), like the other state pension plans, has been kept on life-support with billion-dollar increases in the state income tax.”

“Thanks to the tax increases that many of these reprobates voted for, the state is economically dying and has lost population six years in a row.”

For 2019 and 2020, two GARS pensions exceed \$200,000. From 2019 to 2020, the number of pensions exceeding \$100,000 has gone from 62 to 71, and the number exceeding \$50,000 has gone from 218 to 221.

The highest annual pension, \$265,428, goes to retired legislator Arthur L. Berman (D), the author of the failed Berman Tax Increase Amendment, which we helped defeat years ago. Berman’s total pension paid to date is \$3,670,815.

A central figure responsible for much of the pension crisis is former governor James R. Thompson (R), one of the worst tax-raisers in Illinois history. Thompson currently receives an annual pension of \$165,987. He has received a total pension to date of \$3,219,842. His estimated lifetime pension payout is \$3,385,829.

Former governor, Patrick J. Quinn Jr. (D), the so-called “reform” governor, currently receives an annual pension of \$149,882. He has received a total pension to date of \$694,733. His estimated lifetime pension payout is \$3,255,658.

Former legislator and governor, James R. Edgar (R), receives a current annual pension of \$175,952. He has received a total pension to date of \$2,502,093, and his estimated lifetime

pension payout is \$4,755,649.

Edgar signed into law Senate Bill 3 in 1998, the biggest government pension increase in the history of Illinois. SB3 gave retired government teachers 75% of their salary at retirement, with annual compounded increases of 3 percent. SB3 will cost taxpayers \$4.5 billion in 2020, which is 12% of the Illinois state budget!

The taxes to support these outrageous Illinois government pensions are driving taxpayers out of Illinois. Almost all of the last \$5 billion-dollar state income tax increase was used to prop up the state pension funds. This is why Illinois governor Jay Robert "J. B." Pritzker (D) wants to pass his Nov. 3, 2020 Income Theft Amendment, a massive state income tax increase for Illinois taxpayers. Instead of seeking pension reform, Pritzker wants another massive income tax hike.

Pritzker is destroying the Illinois economy. He wants to place more taxes on the backs of the state's taxpayers, while he stubbornly enforces the Soviet-style state shutdown. Pritzker should explore significant reforms to the state's bankrupt pension plans for retired government employees. He wasn't elected to declare war on the state's middle class.