

TUA NEWS RELEASE

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GROWING GOVERNMENT PENSIONS CHOKE-OUT SANGAMON TAXPAYERS

Springfield, IL – “Government pensions are growing like weeds and, like weeds, are choking out the very taxpayers who fund them,” said Jim Tobin, economist and president of Taxpayers United of America (TUA).

“Springfield and Sangamon county taxpayers pay some of the highest property taxes in the country. Property taxes fund the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) and by law the IMRF must be funded before any other bills can be paid. This means that taxes are funding those lavish, gold-plated pensions and leaving little for services needed today.”

“Sangamon County property taxes have [increased 49% more than home values from 1996 to 2016](#). Taxes are literally stealing from the average taxpayers’ largest asset and retirement nest egg: the family home.”

“Springfield tax-raisers have recently hiked the telecom tax 25% and expanded the hotel tax as well as increasing the sales tax from 8.5% to 8.75%, and this hasn’t made a dent in the huge hole that these government pensions put in the budget.”

The remaining five state pension funds are subsidized with the Illinois state income tax. Some retirees from the State Employees Retirement System (SERS) and the IMRF also receive Social Security pensions. The current average [Social Security pension is \\$18,036](#).

“True to form, Democrat Governor Jay Robert ‘J. B.’ Pritzker ignores the gorilla in the room: government pensions. Instead of addressing the number one financial problem in the state by placing a pension reform amendment on the ballot, he is fixed on gobbling up even more taxpayer wealth with an Income Theft Amendment instead.”

“Between the mass exodus of Illinois residents to more tax-friendly states and the huge loss of jobs and income from Pritzker’s Soviet-style lockdown, Illinois’ middle-class will virtually disappear.”

“It’s mathematically impossible for a huge income tax increase to solve the problem because the pension burden grows at 3% a year, and that is compounded for all but the IMRF pensions. [Illinois is second only to New York in out-migration](#).”

“As a direct result of the Pritzker’s policies, Springfield and Sangamon County taxpayers are struggling without paychecks while nearly all government employees and all government retirees continue to collect

fat paychecks. Here's what some of the political elite are taking home:

Robert A. Alvey retired from Sangamon County government at the age of 60. His current annual pension is \$159,357. With his 3% COLA, he will realize about **\$3,845,595** over a normal lifetime. His personal investment in that stunning payout is only about 2.7%. Mr. Alvey is also eligible for a social security pension.

Robert C. Hill, Springfield SD 186 retiree, has a current annual pension of **\$192,368**. He retired at 55, and will collect about **\$5,292,983** in estimated lifetime pension payments. His personal investment in that rich payout is **only 1%**!

Harry Berman retired from University of Illinois Springfield and currently collects **\$187,679** a year from the State University Retirement System (SURS). His estimated lifetime payout is **\$4,037,246**. He had to invest only \$216,639 of his own money for that payout.”

“Illinois government employees work only 20.1 years on average in order to collect these unrealistic pensions. And for every dollar they deposit in their own pension fund, taxpayers are forced to fork over \$4.74. Add to that a 3% COLA, compounded for all but IMRF, and it doesn't take a genius to understand why Illinois' government pensions are insolvent.”

[Click Here](#) to view top 200 Springfield and Sangamon County IMRF Pensions

[Click Here](#) to view top 200 Springfield and Sangamon County TRS Pensions

[Click Here](#) to view top 200 Springfield and Sangamon County SURS Pensions

“Rather than put an Income Theft Amendment on the ballot, Pritzker should have pushed for a pension reform amendment, because these outrageous pensions are protected by the state constitution.,” said Tobin.