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ILLINOIS GOVERNMENT-EMPLOYEE PENSION REFORM WOULD MAKE TAXES LESS RACIST

Chicago-A report by Cook County Treasurer Maria Pappas, [covered by the Chicago Tribune](#), has some very sobering insights regarding local taxes. The first insight is that Cook County property taxes rose 3 times the rate of inflation, indicating increasingly higher property taxes imposed by local government. The second insight is that the demographic category that pays the highest proportional property taxes consists of minority communities. To quote the Tribune, [the heaviest weight, meanwhile, falls mostly on “less thriving areas with predominantly minority populations and less broad tax bases.”](#) Finally, the Tribune correctly identifies that the primary driver of these higher property taxes as government-employee pensions.

“The Pappas report and the article from the Tribune are both insightful on their own, but when combined with the Taxpayer Education Foundation’s 15th annual Illinois Pension Report, you see a very intriguing narrative forming,” said Matthew Schultz, Executive Director of Taxpayers United of America (TUA). “The report, [which has been republished on the TUA website](#), publishes the names and pensions from the six statewide pension funds for everyone to see.

“Property taxes are going higher, with an undue burden on minority taxpayers. Taxpayer dollars fund a growing elite of mostly white, millionaire retired government employees.”

“As a result, the failed Illinois government pension system is, by some standards, racist.”

“Illinois Governor Jay Robert ‘J. B.’ Pritzker [has vowed to fight for justice and equity, but his lack of action has shown to be anything but](#). In fact, Pritzker’s hell-bent determination to take from minority taxpayers to fund lavish government pensions flies in the face of fairness.”

“Take, for example, Pritzker’s attempt to raise income taxes on the middle class with his proposed tax increase amendment. The sole purpose of the amendment was to take from the Illinois middle class for the sake of government employee pensions. What must be understood though, is that the middle class that Pritzker and his cronies wanted to leach from is [growing more racially diverse](#), and the tax amendment would have hurt their upward economic mobility. Pritzker’s tax hike proposal could be seen as an attack on wealth accumulation against minorities for the benefit of white government pension millionaires.”

“If Pritzker wants to fight institutional racism and not potentially support it, Pritzker needs to urge the general assembly to pass a pension reform amendment. With it, we can cancel government employee pensions as they are, and reform them to be much more equitable for taxpayers and the floundering state budget. With reform, more resources can be put to developing areas left behind the most, and give taxpayers of all colors the break they deserve.”