**Hundreds of Bloomington - Normal Government Retirees Become Pension Millionaires at Taxpayer Expense**

Bloomington—[Taxpayers United of America](http://www.taxpayersunitedofamerica.org/) (TUA) today released the results of a new pension study of the employees of the Cities of Bloomington and Normal, McLean County, McLean County government schools, and Illinois State University.

“Illinois lawmakers continue their abuse of taxpayers by ignoring the number one budgetary problem in the state,” stated Jim Tobin, president of TUA. “Illinois is in horrible financial shape, and yet taxpayers are still expected to pour their hard earned money into a failed government pension system.”

“While residents across McLean County face crushing tax increases, falling home values, high unemployment, and a painfully slow economic recovery, government employees continue to receive stunning pensions largely funded by taxpayers who, on average, collect only $14,800 a year from Social Security.”

“Illinois’ government bureaucrats have been draining taxpayers in McLean County and all across the state for the last 30 years, trading gold-plated pension benefits for the votes they need to stay in power. Across the country, millions of bureaucrats are being paid trillions, to do absolutely nothing! With their 3%, compounded cost of living adjustments (COLA), Illinois’ government retirees double their pensions after only 24 years of retirement.”

“The purpose of our study is to put some perspective around individual pensions, to put them in terms to which the average taxpayer can relate. Area taxpayers, whose average household income is $59,000, need to know how much local government retirees are being paid *not to work* and the astronomical accumulation of those payments over an average lifetime.”

“For example, **Robert S. Nielson** retired from Bloomington SD 87 at the ripe old age of 58 and collects an annual pension of **$158,930**. His estimated lifetime pension payout is a stunning **$6,152,074, 3.7%** of which was his contribution.\*”

“At only 53 years of age, **Thomas A. Hamilton** retired from the City of Bloomington and has an annual pension of **$119,696**, with a staggering estimated lifetime payout of **$5,750,607.** His contribution of the estimated lifetime payout would be **only 1.8%.\*** ”

“Retired Normal government employee, **John M. Callahan,** has an incredible lifetime estimated pension payout of **$3,296,426**\*, **2.9%** of which he contributed, with an annual pension of **$93,812,** retiring at only 58.”

“Illinois’ government pensions are in serious trouble with no end in sight. Government employees should be paid a fair wage for the work they do today so they can save for their own retirement.”

“Without sweeping and immediate reform, Illinois’ pension system ***will*** collapse. Reform must include raising retirement age to 67, increasing employee contributions by 10%, increasing healthcare contributions to 50%, eliminating all COLA’s, and replacing the defined benefit system with a defined contribution system for all new hires. It’s mathematically impossible to tax your way out of this problem. Illinois has more than **6,700 retirees collecting more than $100,000;** in 2020, **that will be over 25,000 six figure pensioners**.”

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