

TUA NEWS RELEASE

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Government Continues to Ruin Higher Education

Chicago—On February 19, Illinois Gov. Bruce Rauner (R) vetoed Senate Bill 2043, legislation that would have appropriated \$721 million for the Monetary Award Program (MAP) and community colleges programs. The Illinois General Assembly might attempt to override Rauner’s veto as early as today, but it is unclear if House Speaker Michael J. Madigan (D) has the votes necessary to do so.

Jim Tobin, founder and president of Taxpayers United of America (TUA), is urging the Illinois General Assembly to let the veto stand.

“Illinois cannot afford to keep throwing good money after bad without first addressing the systemic problems with our state and local governments’ spending of taxpayer dollars. The two political parties continue to undermine one another until one side can claim credit for securing their portion of the stolen loot, meanwhile, Illinois taxpayers lose either way when their taxes are raised to pay for it all,” said Tobin.

In his veto message, Rauner noted that, “the General Assembly has not put forward a plan to pay for these programs, whether through spending reductions, revenue, or cost-saving reforms. The Governor’s Office of Management and Budget concluded that Senate Bill 2043 would add \$721 million to the State’s budget deficit.”

Illinois has a bill backlog totaling more than \$7 billion and is also facing quickly diminishing taxpayer dollars in the state’s financially dreary general fund.

“As a former educator and longtime tax fighter, there is no doubt that too much government intervention in education, particularly in higher education, has led to the unaffordability of college today. Subsidies have driven up tuition costs, expanded administrative bureaucracies, and incentivized schools to misallocate funds for decades,” said Tobin. “The solution is to get the government out of the business of education altogether.”

Rauner has suggested he would back other House and Senate bills that would fund higher education programs, as well as legislation that would authorize him and cabinet members to make other substantial cuts in state government necessary to avoid exacerbating the state’s deficit or contributing to Illinois’ already anemic financial situation.

“I urge members of the Illinois General Assembly to allow Gov. Rauner’s veto of SB 2043 to stand and consider other proposed legislation that would avoid worsening Illinois’ ongoing financial crisis. Taxpayers seek relief from their already significant tax burden, and if that means that legislators need to pressure the Khan of Madiganistan to consider passing other legislation, rather than overriding SB 2043, then it’s time for a rebellion in the Illinois General Assembly,” Tobin concluded.