TUA NEWS RELEASE

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LaSalle County Largesse Crushing Taxpayers

Ottawa, IL —Taxpayers United of America (TUA) today released the results of a new pension and salary study of the employees of LaSalle County government employees, LaSalle County government teachers, Illinois Valley Community College and Ottawa (county seat) Municipal government employees.

"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."

"At 10.8%, LaSalle County has one of the highest unemployment rates in the state. Decreased home values, a 67% increase in state income tax and a 44% increase in Social Security tax have stripped wealth from LaSalle area taxpayers."

"But the outlook for LaSalle County could be positive, if government bureaucrats can keep their greed in check and allow taxpayers to enjoy the growth that can result from a booming mining industry in the area. Rather than look for ways to pillage this growth industry, county officials should be encouraging this growth by limiting regulations and taxation."

"The short sighted greed of the very bureaucrats who put their own high pay and pensions above that of their constituents can potentially stop this boom in mining before it gets started. 80% of all local taxes are used to fund salaries and benefits of government employees. More than 11% of LaSalle County residents are government employees."

"Across the country, millions of bureaucrats are being paid trillions, to do absolutely nothing! With 3%, compounded cost of living adjustments (COLA), LaSalle County government retirees double their pensions after only 24 years of retirement."

"For example, **Steven G. Schoepf** retired from the LaSalle County government at the ripe old age of 55 and collects an annual pension of **$64,053**. His estimated lifetime pension payout is a stunning **$2,798,059, 2.4%** of which was his contribution.*"

"At only 60 years of age, **Craig A. Carter** retired from La Salle-Peru TWP HSD 120 and has an annual pension of **$130,971**, with a staggering estimated lifetime payout of **$4,672,574.** His contribution of the estimated lifetime payout would be **only 4.1%.***"

"Seven Ottawa municipal government employees who all retired before the **age of 59** and some at the **age of 50**, will each collect **more than $1.5 million in pension payments** over a normal lifetime."

"The vast majority of full-time government employees in this study are paid more than the average LaSalle County wage of $37,604 reported by the US Census. Taxpayers simply can't afford to pay so many, so much."

"The Illinois government pension system will collapse by 2015 unless there is sweeping reform: raise retirement age to 67, increase employee pension contributions by 10%, increase healthcare contributions to 50%, eliminate all COLA's, and replace 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 and yet LaSalle County government bureaucrats intend to try."

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