

# TUA NEWS RELEASE

## TAXPAYERS UNITED OF AMERICA

205 W. Randolph St. • Suite 1305 • Chicago, IL 60606 • Phone: (312) 427-5128  
• [www.taxpayersunited.org](http://www.taxpayersunited.org) • E-mail: [jared@taxpayersunited.org](mailto:jared@taxpayersunited.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 10, 2016

Contact: Jared Labell (773) 766-4947  
(312) 427-5128

## No Hope, Nor Change: The Failure of Barack Obama

CHICAGO—President Barack Obama will address the Illinois General Assembly Wednesday afternoon, not far from the Old State Capitol building in Springfield, where exactly nine years ago the Chicago Democrat first announced his candidacy to become the forty-fourth president.

“This rare speech before the state legislature is an early start to a common presidential practice of reflecting on their administration and constructing a narrative for their legacy – before various political analysts, historians, and the public at large have an opportunity to do so,” said Jared Labell, director of operations for Taxpayers United of America (TUA).

Obama will enter the House chamber to speak to the legislature, just across the rotunda from his former state Senate stomping grounds from 1997 until 2004, when he was elected to the U.S. Senate. All eyes will be on him as he contemplates his past two decades in government, attempting to spin his record and bemoan the civility that is so elusory in twenty-first century American politics.

“President Obama is expected to focus on his personal experiences rather than offering up sweeping policy recommendations, although it is anticipated that he will tout his record of working across party lines and renew his call for an end to gerrymandering in America in general, and particularly in Illinois – gerrymandering being the practice of carving up political districts to capture preferred voters and guarantee election results,” said Labell. “Except Obama’s putting his legacy before the facts, forgetting that his bipartisan efforts are typically disastrous for taxpayers and that his political stardom began with the Chicago Combine, the longtime one party system of rulers and bureaucrats who for decades have helped destroy both the city and Illinois.”

Ryan Lizza’s July 2008 *New Yorker* article, [Making It](#), argues the latter point at length, but principally relevant, “The partisan redistricting of Illinois may have been the most important event in Obama’s early political life. It immediately gave him the two things he needed to run for the Senate in 2004: money and power. He needed to have several times as much cash as he’d raised for his losing congressional race in 2000, and many of the state’s top donors now lived or worked in his district. More important, the statewide gerrymandering made it likely that Obama’s party would take over the State Senate in 2002, an event that would provide him with a platform from which to craft a legislative record in time for the campaign.”

As to the former point, [Obama’s track record](#) in the Illinois General Assembly isn’t something he should revisit during his speech later today, unless he wants to rehash his abysmal voting record and that old cliché about reaching across the aisle. In Obama’s case, however, reaching across the aisle is just a means to shove the government deeper in to the pockets of taxpayers.

“TUA has conducted a biennial Tax Survey of the Illinois General Assembly since 1983, rating legislators’ votes on the basis of their commitment to taxpayers, and Obama’s tenure from ’97-’04 is appallingly bad,” said Labell. “Between the 90<sup>th</sup> and 93<sup>rd</sup> Illinois General Assembly terms, then-State Senator Obama scored as high as thirty-four percent and as low as a whopping flat-out zero, indicating that anywhere from two-thirds to one-hundred percent of the time, Obama voted on behalf of the state, the government unions, and the tax-raisers –

# TUA NEWS RELEASE

## TAXPAYERS UNITED OF AMERICA

205 W. Randolph St. • Suite 1305 • Chicago, IL 60606 • Phone: (312) 427-5128  
• [www.taxpayersunited.org](http://www.taxpayersunited.org) • E-mail: [jared@taxpayersunited.org](mailto:jared@taxpayersunited.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 10, 2016

Contact: Jared Labell (773) 766-4947  
(312) 427-5128

not the taxpayers who have to toil under the devastating policies of the government elite and Illinois' political class."

"If Obama addresses Illinois' budget impasse today, now in the midst of its eighth month – and without a resolution in sight, he might want to skip over recounting the votes he cast during his first term in office, including: HB313, which allowed county boards to double their pensions and drive up property taxes in Illinois; HB110, an outrageous spending increase that boosted pensions for ninety-seven percent of Illinois' state employees by fifty-four percent, costing taxpayers roughly \$15 million each year; and SB3, which forced taxpayers to subsidize overly generous increases in pensions for government teachers, costing Illinois taxpayers tens of billions of dollars over the next few decades – and we still have a few decades more to go. These are prime examples of Obama's version of working across the aisle: teaming up with a tax-raising Republican governor, [Jim Edgar](#), with the end result of stiffing taxpayers," said Labell. "When Obama says bipartisanship, he means the two parties coming together to loot taxpayers, which is of course prevalent in statehouses across the country and in the District of Criminals on the Potomac, where he must feel right at home after the last decade."

Obama's record didn't improve in the U.S. Senate, as he received an annual [F-rating](#) in the single and low double digits from the National Taxpayers Union for his tenure from 2005-2007 (2008 being unavailable due to his election to the presidency).

"The public is well aware of the U.S. Senate record of Barack Obama morphing in to his ruinous two terms in the White House: from corporate bailouts at the start of his presidency, to his unprecedented crack down on whistleblowers; from ushering in the unaffordable care act known as Obamacare, to codifying ubiquitous NSA spying in to law; from shredding the Constitution by undermining individual rights and maintaining the shameful U.S. detention facility in Guantanamo Bay; and to the hundreds of billions of taxpayer dollars squandered to continue and expand George W. Bush's global military crusade and its brutal interventions in countless nations, including but not limited to Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, Somalia, Pakistan, Libya, and now Syria – it all begins with the Chicago Combine and the wasteland that spawns Illinois' political elite," said Labell. "And here Obama is, coming back to Springfield to carve out a nice legacy for himself the day after releasing his record [\\$4.1 trillion budget for fiscal year 2017](#), which includes \$3 trillion in proposed tax hikes."

"You won't find this passage noted on the doorway inside the statehouse, nor will it be found in the halls of the U.S. Congress, and it won't adorn the entrance to the White House, the seat of the American Empire. But in all three cases, it would be fitting to post on the doorframes the inscription described in Dante's *Divine Comedy* as he passes through the gates of hell. The engraving reads, 'Abandon all hope, ye who enter here.' Obama's political legacy is the abandonment of hope and change – it's replete with failure, from Springfield to D.C., and now back again. No matter how pessimistic the outlook seems presently, we must never back down from the defense of freedom. Our work is not yet done and we must maintain our long-term optimism to ensure free markets, peace, and individual liberty will one day mean something again in America," concluded Labell.