

TUA NEWS RELEASE

TAXPAYERS UNITED OF AMERICA

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 22, 2013

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9,900 Illinois Government Pensioners With Annual Pensions Over \$100k

Chicago—[Taxpayers United of America](http://www.taxpayersunited.org) (TUA) today released the results of its annual study of the top government pensions in the State of Illinois.

“Illinois House Speaker, Michael Madigan (D), and Senate Majority Leader, John Cullerton (D), continue their political charade of pension reform while the number of six-figure pensioners grows 47% in one year to 9,900”, according to TUA president, Jim Tobin.

“Illinois is quickly running out of time to deal with the government-created crisis of unfunded pension liabilities. Madigan and Cullerton engage in a carefully choreographed pension reform debate that provides political cover for their allegiance to the union bosses who keep them in power.”

“The reality is that they have crafted legislation packaged as sweeping reform that will do more harm to taxpayers than no reform at all. The Madigan version of pension reform will provide a [funding guarantee](#) that places the cost of this elite group of government pensioners squarely on the backs of taxpayers and make these outrageous pensions the first priority of the budget – before any other services or obligations of the state.”

“Real pension reforms were proposed in HB3303 which was introduced by representatives Tom Morrison and Jeanne Ives, but that bill did nothing to help the union bosses maintain favor with their rank and file and was quickly rejected by Boss Madigan.”

“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. Illinois taxpayers, whose average household income is \$53,234, and struggle with 9.3% unemployment need to know how much Illinois’ government retirees are being paid *not to work* and the astronomical accumulation of those payments over an average lifetime.”

“We actually expanded our list from the top 100 to the top 200 since there are so many six-figure pensioners now. The top 200 are all over \$189,000a year.”

“Still topping our list of Illinois’ government elite in annual payouts is [Tapas Das Gupta](#), retired from the University of Illinois at Chicago. He collected a cool **\$439,672** in his last annual pension payment and will accumulate a stunning **\$5.2 million** in lifetime pension payments.*”

“[Beverly Lopatka](#) retired from DuPage Government HSD 88 at the ripe old age of 56 and has an annual pension of **\$399,652**, with a staggering estimated lifetime payout of **\$11,524,643**. Her contribution of the estimated lifetime payout would be **only 0.8%.***”

“The highest lifetime payout estimate goes to [Larry K. Fleming](#) retired from government school district Lincolnshire-Prairie View 103. Having retired at 55 with a cushy annual pension of \$258,163, he will accumulate a breathtaking **\$11,868,155** in pension payments over a normal lifetime.”

“Illinois’ financial condition is in the tank. We have the worst credit rating, the highest unfunded pension liabilities and one of the highest unemployment rates in the country. We had a net loss of 74,000 productive, taxpaying residents last year. What does it take to get serious about pension reform that will solve problems, not create new ones?”

Founded in 1976, TUA is one of the largest taxpayer organizations in America.

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“Without sweeping and immediate reform, Illinois’ government pension system *will* collapse by 2015. It’s mathematically impossible to tax your way out of this problem. Illinois has more than 9,900 retirees collecting more than \$100,000; in 2020, that will be over 25,000 six-figure pensioners. Real pension reform must include raising the 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.”

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