

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE  
SIXTH SPECIAL SESSION

1st Legislative Day

7/9/2007

Speaker Madigan: "We will now proceed to the Sixth Special Session. The House shall come to order. Is there leave to use the Attendance Roll Call of the First Special Session for the purpose this Session? Leave is granted. Mr. Clerk, read the Proclamation."

Clerk Mahoney: "WHEREAS, Article XIII, Section 5 of the Illinois Constitution of 1970 requires the State to provide pension benefits to members of state-sponsored retirement systems; and

WHEREAS, the State of Illinois sponsors a retirement plan on behalf of State university employees; and

WHEREAS, the state university employees, retirees and their families rely on the security provided by pension benefits to meet their needs, including food, housing, and healthcare after retirement; and

WHEREAS, in the State Universities Retirement System's (SURS) mission to provide for annuitants, participants and their employers, in accordance with State law, the best and most cost-effective benefit administration services in the United States; to manage and invest the fund's assets prudently; and to endeavor to achieve and maintain a financially sound retirement system; and

WHEREAS, pensions managed and administered by SURS are underfunded, and the General Assembly has not passed any measures that address such under-funding; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois Constitution requires the General Assembly to make appropriations for the expenditure of public funds for the fiscal year for State departments, authorities, and public agencies; and

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WHEREAS, the Department of Healthcare and Family Services' Division of Medical Programs assists sexual assault victims; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly has passed, and I have signed, a temporary, one-month budget providing spending authority to the Department of Healthcare and Family Services for grants to provide assistance to sexual assault victims and for sexual assault prevention activities; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly failed to provide for the expenditure of public funds after July of Fiscal Year 2008 for grants administered by the Department of Healthcare and Family Services to provide assistance to sexual assault victims and for sexual assault prevention activities;

THEREFORE, pursuant to Article IV, Section 5(b) of the Illinois Constitution of 1970, I hereby call and convene the 95th General Assembly in a Special Session to commence on July 9, 2007, at 1:00 p.m., to consider any legislation, new or pending, which will address the funding of the State Universities Retirement System as well as funding for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2008 for grants administered by the Department of Healthcare and Family Services to provide assistance to sexual assault victims and for sexual assault prevention activities.

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ROD R. BLAGOJEVICH  
Governor

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Clerk, are there Resolutions?"

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Clerk Mahoney: "House Sixth Special Session Resolution 1 and 2 have been introduced."

Speaker Madigan: "Representative Currie."

Currie: "Thank you, Speaker. I move for the immediate consideration and the suspension of applicable House Rules for the adoption of Sixth Special Session House Resolutions 1 and 2."

Speaker Madigan: "You've all heard the Lady's Motion. Is there... Mr. John Bradley. You've all heard the Lady's Motion. Those in favor say 'aye'; those opposed say 'no'. The 'ayes' have it and the Motion is adopted. Representative Currie."

Currie: "Thank you, Speaker. Would the Clerk please read Sixth Special Session House Resolutions 1 and 2."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Clerk."

Clerk Mahoney: "Sixth Special Session House Resolution #1.

RESOLVED, that the Rules of the House of Representatives of the Ninety-Fifth General Assembly be adopted as the Rules of this Sixth Special Session, so far as the same may be applicable, and that the Committees of the House of Representatives of the Ninety-Fifth General Assembly, shall constitute the Committees of the House during this Sixth Special Session.

Sixth Special Session House Resolution #2.

RESOLVED, that the Clerk inform the Senate that a majority of the House of Representatives has assembled, pursuant to the proclamation of the Governor, convening a Sixth Special Session of the General Assembly, and are now ready for the transaction of business."

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Speaker Madigan: "Representative Currie."

Currie: "I move the adoption of the Sixth Special Session Resolutions 1 and 2."

Speaker Madigan: "You've all heard the Lady's Motion. Those in favor say 'aye'; those opposed say 'no'. The 'ayes' have it. The Resolutions are adopted. Representative Currie moves that this Special Session stand in recess. Those in favor say 'aye'; those opposed say 'no'. The 'ayes' have it. This Special Session stands in recess. The Chair recognizes Mr. John Bradley."

Bradley, J.: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Point of personal privilege."

Speaker Madigan: "State your point."

Bradley, J.: "We were advised earlier today that Governor Blagojevich intended to have a press conference, and I believe he did, regarding the issue of gun control. We all have strong beliefs in this chamber over the issue of gun control. And we have spent the last six months debating those issues eloquently on both sides. And whether we disagree or agree on that issue and whether we're pro gun like myself or pro-gun control like many of our colleagues, the question becomes, why has the administration, which according to searches has not mentioned gun control or the assault weapons bans in press conferences and press releases for the last six months. In fact, since the election decided at this time to call this to the forefront of Special Sessions. And the only logical conclusion that I can draw is that this is an attempt to divide this House, to divide this caucus, to divide this state further. Abraham

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Lincoln said, 'That a house divided shall fall.' And I know of no other explanation than to call this Special Session, to call this issue at this time. We have resisted bad ideas in the House. We have resisted the temptations to be divided as a House and we have stuck together on crucial issues. We cannot let this issue divide us as it is obviously intended to do. We the state, the people of the State of Illinois as represented by this Body, are burning with electrical rates, with gas prices, with a budget which is not passed. And yet, a Special Session on gun control? Ladies and Gentlemen, this is an attack on this House. This is an attack on our ability to be a co-equal branch of government. This is an attack on the process of government. This is an attack on us and the people that we represent. My fellow Illinoisans, Members of the House, the Governor said in his inauguration address he quoted Theodore Roosevelt in saying that, 'we should dare greatly and strive valiantly.' But he left out part of that quote. Theodore Roosevelt on April the 23rd, 1910 said, 'It is not the critic who counts, not the man who points out how strong the man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena.' We are in the arena. We are here. Our faces are bloody. We have dirt on our face. We continue to invite others to participate in the arena. Our children are here. Our families are here. Let's solve the issues that need to be solved. Let's quit playing games and let's get in the arena and get the job done."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Lang."

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Lang: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen. I don't think I could say it better than Mr. Bradley, but I do have some concern about a Special Session that would be called on a matter that is not budgetary at this time. Mr. Bradley and I, I don't even think are on the same side on the assault weapon issue, but we would agree on this. We would agree that the first priority for the state right now is to pass a budget, a budget that fairly and accurately reflects the revenue that we have or the revenue we can gather and fairly and accurately sets priorities for the people of the State of Illinois. I would be for an assault weapon ban. I would invite the Governor to help us next spring or in some other... at some other time to get this the floor. But one can only conclude that an effort to bring a gun control issue to the floor at this time would only be for the purpose of deflecting our energies and deflecting the media away from what we're doing here. I, for one, think we should not be doing that deflecting. I, for one, believe we should be concentrating on our budget and only on our budget until we get this work done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker."

Speaker Madigan: "The Sixth Special Session shall be called to order. Representative Currie moves that the House stand adjourned until tomorrow afternoon at 1 p.m. Those in favor signify by saying 'yes'; those opposed by saying 'no'. The 'ayes' have it. The House does stand adjourned until tomorrow afternoon at 1 p.m."