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95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
REGULAR SESSION
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96th Legislative Day

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PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HALVORSON)

The regular Session of the 95th General Assembly will please come to order. Madam Secretary, Reading and Approval of the Journal.

SECRETARY SHIPLEY:

Senate Journal of September 17th, 2007.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HALVORSON)

Senator Hunter.

SENATOR HUNTER:

Madam President, I move that the Journal just read by the Secretary be approved, unless some Senators has additions or corrections to offer.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HALVORSON)

Senator Hunter moves to approve the Journals just read by the Secretary. There being no objection, so ordered. Madam Secretary, Resolutions.

SECRETARY SHIPLEY:

Senate Resolutions 333 and -- 334, offered by Senator Hultgren and all Members.

Senate Resolution 335, offered by Senator Haine and all Members.

Senate Resolution 336, offered by Senator Clayborne and all Members.

Senate Resolutions 337 through 339, offered by Senator Forby and all Members.

Senate Resolution 40 -- 340, offered by Senator Haine and all Members.

Senate Resolution 341, offered by Senator Hunter and all Members.

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Senate Resolution 342, offered by Senator Dillard and all Members.

Senate Resolutions 343 through 345, offered by Senator Haine and all Members.

Senate Resolutions 346 through 352, offered by Senator Link and all Members.

Senate Resolution 353, offered by Senator Munoz and all Members.

Senate Resolutions 354 through 356, offered by Senator Haine and all Members.

Senate Resolutions 355 -- 357, I'm sorry, through 358, offered by Senator Hultgren and all Members.

Senate Resolution 359, offered by Senator Brady and all Members.

Senate Resolution 360, offered by Senator Althoff and all Members.

Senate Resolutions 361 and 362, offered by Senator Link and all Members.

Senate Resolution 363, offered by Senator Emil Jones and all Members.

Senate Resolution 364, offered by Senator Dillard and all Members.

Senate Resolutions 365 and 366, offered by Senator Link and all Members.

Senate Resolution 367, offered by Senator Clayborne and all Members.

Senate Resolution 368, offered by Senator Murphy and all Members.

Senate Resolution 369, offered by Senator Silverstein and

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all Members.

And Senate Resolution 370, offered by Senator Demuzio and all Members.

They're all death resolutions, Madam President.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HALVORSON)

Resolutions Consent Calendar. Madam Secretary, Introduction of Bills.

SECRETARY SHIPLEY:

Senate Bill 1861, offered by Senator Dahl.

(Secretary reads title of bill)

I'm sorry. Senate Bill 1861, offered by Senator Dahl.

(Secretary reads title of bill)

Senate Bill 1862, offered by Senator Haine.

(Secretary reads title of bill)

Senate Bill 1863, offered by Senator Schoenberg.

(Secretary reads title of bill)

Senate Bill 1864, offered by Senator Lightford.

(Secretary reads title of bill)

And Senate Resolution {sic} 1865, offered by Senator Noland.

(Secretary reads title of bill)

1st Reading of the bills.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HALVORSON)

Madam Secretary, Messages.

SECRETARY SHIPLEY:

A Message from the House by Mr. Mahoney, Clerk.

Mr. President - I am directed to inform the Senate that the House of Representatives has concurred with the Senate in the passage of a bill of the following title, to wit:

Senate Bill 671, together with the following

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amendments which are attached, in the adoption of which I am instructed to ask the concurrence of the Senate, to wit:

House Amendment No. 1 to Senate Bill 671 and House Amendment No. 2 to Senate Bill 671.

Passed the House, as amended, September 4th, 2007. Mark Mahoney, Clerk of the House.

I have another Message from the House by Mr. Mahoney, Clerk.

Mr. President - I am directed to inform the Senate that the House of Representatives has adopted the following joint resolution, in the adoption of which I am instructed to ask the concurrence of the Senate, to wit:

House Joint Resolution 75.

Offered by Senator Meeks. Adopted by the House, August 1st, 2007. Mark Mahoney, Clerk of the House.

It is substantive, Madam President.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HALVORSON)

Rules Committee will meet immediately in the President's Antechamber. Rules Committee, immediately in the President's Antechamber. Madam Secretary, Committee Reports.

SECRETARY SHIPLEY:

Senator Halvorson, Chairman of the Committee on Rules, reports the following Legislative Measures have been assigned: Refer to Executive Committee - Floor Amendment No. 1 to Senate Bill 785, Floor Amendment No. 5 to Senate Bill 1110 and Floor Amendment No. 8 to House Bill 2035; refer to Transportation Committee - Floor Amendments 1 and 2 to House Bill 3667.

Senator Debbie Halvorson, Chairman. September 18th, 2007.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HALVORSON)

I'd like to make an announcement, if everybody could please

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listen: Executive Committee will be meeting at 3:30 in Room 212 and Transportation Committee will meet at 3:45 in Room 400, I believe it is. I will repeat that. Executive Committee will be meeting at 3:30 in Room 212. Transportation will be meeting at 3:45 in Room 400. We will now proceed to the Order of Resolutions Consent Calendar. With leave of the Body, all those resolutions read in today will be added to the Consent Calendar. Madam Secretary, have there been any objections filed to any resolution on the Consent Calendar?

SECRETARY SHIPLEY:

No objections filed, Madam President.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR HALVORSON)

Is there any discussion? If not, the objections -- if not, the question is, shall the resolutions on the Consent Calendar be adopted. All those in favor, say Aye. Opposed, Nay. The Ayes have it, and the motion carries. And the resolutions are adopted. The Senate will stand in recess to the call of the Chair. After committees, the Senate will reconvene for further Floor action. The Senate stands in recess till the call of the Chair.

(SENATE STANDS IN RECESS/SENATE RECONVENES)

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

The Senate will please come to order. Will all the Senators at the sound of my voice please come to the Senate Floor immediately? The -- there will be a Rules Committee meeting immediately in the President's Anteroom. Rules Committee meeting in the President's Anteroom immediately. Before the Rules

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Committee meeting commences, Madam Secretary, Committee Reports.

SECRETARY SHIPLEY:

Senator Silverstein, Chairperson of the Committee on Executive, reports Floor Amendment No. 1 to Senate Bill 785, Floor Amendment No. 5 to Senate Bill 1110 and Floor Amendment No. 8 to House Bill 2035 recommend Do Adopt.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Madam Secretary, Committee Reports.

SECRETARY SHIPLEY:

Senator Halvorson, Chairman of the Committee on Rules, reports the following Legislative Measures have been assigned: Be Approved for Consideration - Floor Amendment No. 2 to Senate Bill 785, Floor Amendment No. 6 to Senate Bill 1110, Floor Amendment No. 9 and 10 to House Bill 2035.

Senator Debbie Halvorson, Chairman. September 18th, 2007.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Will all Senators in the sound of my voice come to the Senate Floor immediately, because we will be going to action immediately? All Senators at the sound of my voice, come to the Senate Floor immediately, because we will be going to action immediately. Thank you. Senator Bomke, for what purpose do you rise?

SENATOR BOMKE:

Thank you, Mr. President. A point of personal privilege.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

State your point.

SENATOR BOMKE:

Yesterday, I mentioned a Page that was here this spring, Alexander Chipman. We have a picture behind the Democrats, over

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in the corner; if those of you would take time to sign your name, we would appreciate it. You may recall, Alexander has had a brain tumor that apparently has come back. He's not doing all that well, but I would appreciate it. I know he would very much appreciate a signature from all Members in the Senate. Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Ladies and Gentlemen, we will be going to House Bills 3rd Reading, page 32, House Bill 2035. Senator Hendon, on House Bill 2035.

SENATOR HENDON:

Thank -- thank you, Mr. President. I'd like the bill moved back to 2nd Reading for the purposes of amending - Amendments 8, 9 and 10.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Hendon seeks leave of the Body to -- return House Bill 2035 to the Order of 2nd Reading for purposes of amendment. Hearing no objection, leave is granted. On the Order of 2nd Reading is House Bill 2035. Madam Secretary, are there any amendments approved for consideration?

SECRETARY SHIPLEY:

Amendment No. 8, offered by Senator Hendon.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Hendon, to explain your amendment.

SENATOR HENDON:

Thank -- thank you, Mr. President. Amendment No. 8 is the main amendment, which is the substance of the bill. This is the funding source for the capital program and for the RTA-CTA, Pace, Metra - transportation needs throughout the State, including

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downstate Illinois. It is pretty much the same as it was before: one land-based for Chicago and two riverboat casinos at large. This is the revenue source, the only game in town, and I'll be happy to answer any questions on the amendment if there are any at this time. Other than that, I appreciate the support of the Body.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Is there any discussion? Seeing none, Senator Hendon moves the adoption of Amendment 8 to House Bill 2035. All those in favor will say Aye. Opposed, Nay. The Ayes have it. The amendment is adopted. Are there any further Floor amendments approved for consideration?

SECRETARY SHIPLEY:

Floor Amendment No. 9, offered by Senator Hendon.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Hendon, to explain your amendment.

SENATOR HENDON:

Thank you, Mr. President. Amendment No. 9 is rescinding -- rescinding the smoking provisions that we put in the bill for the border locations. This is something I think we need to do at this time to assure passage of the final bill. And it simply rescinds the -- the smoking section on the three border boats. I'd be -- happy to answer any question.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Is there any discussion? Senator Righter.

SENATOR RIGHTER:

Thank you, Mr. President. Will the sponsor yield, please?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Indicates he will.

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SENATOR RIGHTER:

Thank you, Mr. President. Senator Hendon, so as I understand it, Floor Amendment 9 removes the smoking exemption for the three border boats. Is that correct?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Hendon.

SENATOR HENDON:

That -- that is absolutely correct. And let me say, the purpose for putting it in in the first place was economic development, encouraging people to not go across the border who have to have a cigarette while they lose their money. But I don't think it's necessary, so we are now taking it out.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Trotter.

SENATOR TROTTER:

If I could...

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Trotter, at Senator Ronen's desk.

SENATOR TROTTER:

Yes. I'm speaking from Senator Ronen's desk. I understand that the microphones are not working in the front row. ...like to make a statement for purposes of legislative intent and history for this legislation. Excuse me. I was talking to the amendment. I'll -- I'll wait till they accept all the amendments and I will give the legislative intent at that time.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Okay, Senator Trotter. Senator Clayborne.

SENATOR CLAYBORNE:

Will the sponsor yield for a question?

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PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Indicates he will.

SENATOR CLAYBORNE:

Senator Hendon, we passed the gaming bill with the smoking..

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Excuse me, Senator Clayborne. This is an important piece of legislation. Could we please have it quiet on the Floor - with everybody, please? Senator Clayborne.

SENATOR CLAYBORNE:

Thank you. We passed the gaming bill with the smoking exemption out, just a little more than an hour ago. What happened between now and then?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Hendon.

SENATOR HENDON:

Senator Clayborne, I think I stepped outside and had a cigarette and -- no. Actually, you know, around here, Senator Clayborne, you know I fought very hard to put this in there for you. I believe politics is the art of compromise and I really want to be able to pass this tonight. The worst tragedy for the people of the State of Illinois would not be able to pass this. So, I beg you to -- even though there might be one portion that you don't like, there's some other things in here that you do like. And I hope that you would support the bill based on what you like, instead of the one matter that you don't like.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Clayborne.

SENATOR CLAYBORNE:

Thank -- thank you. I -- I know that there have been

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studies and -- by a group that says they've conducted a study. Senator Hendon, you've been to East St. Louis. You say it's the art of compromise. Well, I -- I don't -- I don't know who you compromised with, but do you believe that the casinos would not lose revenue when there's a -- a competitor just less than a mile across the -- the river who does allow smoking?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Hendon.

SENATOR HENDON:

...been to East St. Louis, Casino Queen. I agree with you that your community, that boat may lose some -- some -- some revenue. And that's why I fought hard with you on this. In addition, I intend to, next Session or as soon as possible, try to work with you on the -- the tax rate for these boats, so perhaps that would help you out and on the border communities. And everything else that you've brought up, you know I have been supportive of one hundred percent. Right now, this is just necessary in order to pass it and I hope that you can find a way in your heart to support it.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Noland.

SENATOR NOLAND:

Thank you, Mr. President. The sponsor yield for a question or two?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

The sponsor indicates he will yield.

SENATOR NOLAND:

Thank you. Senator Hendon, I -- if I may draw your attention, I don't know if you have the full text of the bill

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here, but turning to page 183, section (e-10), where it says, "In granting all licenses, the Board may give favorable consideration to economically depressed areas of the State..." Can you explain what the difference would be if we were to change that word "may" to "shall"? What measurable difference would there be in the licensing procedure?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Hendon.

SENATOR HENDON:

Senator Noland, that does not relate to the amendment that's -- we're discussing right now, which is the exemption in smoking. But I will address that when we get to the final bill.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Noland.

SENATOR NOLAND:

Just wanted to say thank you for the clarification. Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Jacobs.

SENATOR JACOBS:

Mr. President, question of the sponsor.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Sponsor indicates he will yield.

SENATOR JACOBS:

Senator, you can't be for this amendment. Are you really for this amendment?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Hendon.

SENATOR HENDON:

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Senator, this -- this amendment is -- is like sending my child to school in a different outfit that I chose from them, but her mom picked another outfit. And I don't want to argue with her over a outfit. Long as she goes to class and gets straight A's, I'll be happy.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Jacobs.

SENATOR JACOBS:

Mr. President, I would like to have a roll call at the end of this. And also, I just wonder why it is that the majority of Illinois public officials feel they should put tyranny on the minority. My friends, it makes no sense to me to be in a position where my people can go to Illinois -- Illinois and Rock Island and -- and gamble there and not smoke, but they can go five minutes away and go to any choice of the casinos on the other side. What -- what's the thought process behind making Illinois riverboats put one hand behind their back in -- in a fight for their lives?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Hendon.

SENATOR HENDON:

Well, Senator Jacobs, I probably don't have a better friend in this Chamber than you and I most certainly would like to accommodate you and Senator Clayborne, which I -- I did, putting it in here in the first place, but the reality of the situation is I'm -- I have to do this in order to pass the bill. I hope the good things in the bill will be enough to get you and Senator Clayborne and others who really wanted this amendment, and who I agree with on this amendment, to go along with the -- the final

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bill.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Jacobs.

SENATOR JACOBS:

I only hope, Senator Hendon, and I agree with you, you are my friend, and you've been a good friend to my community as well, but I only hope that four to five months from now, when this smoking ban is enacted and the children of Illinois don't get their -- the money that they -- they should have coming to them, that we can explain why. So, I'm just asking and asking for your support. We may lose today, but tomorrow's another day, and if, in fact, we find out through the information that Illinois is losing a large portion of dollars, Senator, would you help me overturn what we're doing today?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Hendon.

SENATOR HENDON:

I -- I most certainly will, Senator Jacobs. In fact, it's no secret that I believe we need to do a number of things along the border to help the border communities. I believe we should have a lower sales tax along the border. I believe we should have a lower gasoline tax along the border, because we have to compete against these other states. So I certainly give you my word that I will continue to echo and fight for these things along the border because they are really needed. And that's why, Senator Clayborne, since you know that I'm sincere in everything I say in this Chamber, I hope I can get your support today and we can work on those other issues a little later on.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

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Senator Watson.

SENATOR WATSON:

Thank you, Mr. President. As you all know, I voted against the smoking ban and agree with Senator Jacobs, agree with Senator Clayborne, agree with Senator -- Hendon. So where are we on this? My attitude would be to support the amendment, to -- to support Senator Hendon. If you're interested in seeing the bill move forward, that's a part of what we need to do. It's against my basic principles, because I think that people should be allowed to smoke wherever they want to smoke. I'm not one personally, but I think if we're going to move the bill forward, I'm with Senator Hendon, and I hope that this side of the aisle will support and vote Yes on the amendment to take the language out.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Seeing no more question, the question is, shall Amendment 9 to House Bill 2035 be adopted. All those in favor will vote Aye. All opposed, Nay. The voting is open. Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Take the record. On that question, there are 47 Ayes, 7 Nays, 1 Present. The amendment is adopted. Are there any further Floor amendments approved for consideration?

SECRETARY SHIPLEY:

Yes, Mr. President. Floor Amendment No. 10, offered by Senator Hendon.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Hendon, on the amendment.

SENATOR HENDON:

Thank you, Mr. President. Pursuant to the agreement made in

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committee, Amendment No. 10 just makes it clear that the revenue related to the issuance of the additional leased position shall be distributed as follows: thirty percent, education; seventy percent to capital program over five years. And after five years as follows: thirty percent to education, seventy percent to the G.O. Bond Retirement and Interest Fund, and it clarifies. I'd appreciate support of the Body.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Is -- is there any discussion? Senator Hendon moves the adoption of Amendment 10 to House Bill 2035. All those in favor will say Aye. Opposed, Nay. The Ayes have it. The amendment is adopted. Are there any further Floor amendments approved for consideration?

SECRETARY SHIPLEY:

No further amendments reported, Mr. President.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

3rd Reading. Madam Secretary, read the bill.

SECRETARY SHIPLEY:

House Bill 2035.

(Secretary reads title of bill)

3rd Reading of the bill.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Hendon.

SENATOR HENDON:

Thank you, Mr. President. First, I'd like to say that I truly appreciate the kind words of Leader Watson and his support for the amendment, even though he and I agree that we -- we probably need to do something for the borders. In addition, I want to thank Leader Watson and other Members on the other side

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of the aisle who have worked with us through this entire process. It's been a long process. This is the revenue stream to drive everything we need. We need everyone to be on it. I think it's a good bill. I think that if -- if it becomes necessary to come up with another revenue stream, we can look at that later, but right now this is what we need to do. We've already pretty much discussed the bill. I'll be happy to answer any questions, but let me say this, we need capital for all parts of the State, up north, down south, west side, East St. Louis, you name it. It's in here. It's available for all the Members, and I think because of that, it has brought us together and made this a much better bill than it was before when I passed it out of here. I believe in it even stronger than I did before and I'd urge an Aye vote. I'll be happy to answer any questions.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Is there any discussion? Senator Dillard.

SENATOR DILLARD:

Thank you, Mr. President. Would the sponsor yield for a question, please?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Sponsor indicates he will yield.

SENATOR DILLARD:

Senator Hendon, does the Chicago casino and the riverboats both have to pay the impact fee or is it just the boats?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Hendon.

SENATOR HENDON:

Yes. All -- both -- all of 'em have to pay. I think that we're not going to treat Chicago any better than anybody else,

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not me anyway.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Dillard.

SENATOR DILLARD:

Great. Thank you, Mr. President. To the bill: I gingerly rise in support of this bill. It's mid-September. It's not May when we were supposed to adjourn and we haven't passed a school construction, road and bridge improvement, water and sewer or environmental cleanup bill since 1999. The State desperately does need a capital bill. I don't like the funding source of this bill. I think the gambling portion is far too large and it's disappointing that the Democrats have, quite frankly, put all the eggs in that basket. However, we need to keep the heat on and the process of getting to an ultimate capital bill moving. And I believe that this bill, aside from its funding source, which I don't like, provides an excellent subset for what will hopefully be a final infrastructure and school construction bill some time in the next few weeks around here. It's hypocritical to vote for the capital bill, the funding itself, without voting for a funding source. So, as distasteful as I find the gambling portion of this bill to be, I don't think it's going to be the final funding source. Some of it will be, but not all of it. But we desperately need a capital bill. We need to move this process going along and I certainly rise gingerly, as I said, to support this bill.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Meeks.

SENATOR MEEKS:

Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. To the bill: You know,

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I'm very shocked and surprised at what we're doing here tonight. We've decided as a Body that we could come together in a bipartisan way in order to support a gaming bill. If all of those reporters over there asked each Legislator walking out of the caucus, walking out of the Senate tonight, what's our individual priority, all of us would say education, the education of Illinois kids, the number one priority of all of us. But did we come together in a bipartisan way to properly fund education? No, we didn't. We've come together tonight because of the capital bill. That's what's driving this revenue source, the capital bill - dams, bridges, highways, roads. We want to be able to go back home and tell our constituents that we brought home billions of dollars for capital, for roads and for highways, and we want to look at our constituents and say, "You didn't even have to pay for it." And when they ask us "How will it be paid", we're going to tell them, "It's going to be paid for by gaming." Well, Ladies and Gentlemen, whether we know it or not, gaming is a tax on poor people. Rather than having the gumption to go home and tell our constituents that we're going to raise taxes for better schools, for a capital bill, for health care, we devised a scheme to deliver capital at somebody else's expense. I became a part of this Body for one reason, because I felt that the General Assembly was the Body that was supposed to protect the vulnerable people of our society. That is why we passed a seatbelt law, to protect people from themselves. That is why we passed a curfew law for young drivers. That is why we said young drivers can only have one person in the car, because this Assembly cares enough to try to protect people from themselves. Somebody even came up with a bill that said that a person had to be a certain

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age before they could put gas in a lawnmower, because that's what we try to do here, to protect people from themselves. The top ten zip code areas who play the lottery are the top ten zip code areas where people of high poverty live. You go to the riverboat any first weekend, when people get their subsidy checks, they're there trying to figure out a way how to make ends meet. How could we in good conscience not protect these people from themselves? It's all because we want somebody else to pay for our bridges, to pay for our roads and to pay for our highways. The people who ride the CTA should pay. The people who get roads, bridges and dams, they should pay. I don't think that when we go to our churches and all of our people who shake our hands and say, "Senator, we're praying for you; go to Springfield, do a good job, protect the people", I don't think this is what they have in mind. I don't think that they want us to rape the most vulnerable people. I think they want us to protect the people. And I think to save the integrity of this Body, we should all vote No against this bill.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Noland. Senator Noland.

SENATOR NOLAND:

Thank you, Mr. President. It's kind of tough to follow the words that have been so persuasive here. It suddenly gives me, perhaps, more reason to vote No on this bill. But I'll tell you why and I'll ask some questions first, and then I'll explain why I may be voting No on this bill.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

The sponsor indicates he will yield.

SENATOR NOLAND:

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Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, sponsor. Senator Hendon, and as I asked before, in referring to page 183, section (e-10), let me just read the first sentence to you. It says, "In granting all licenses, the Board may give favorable consideration to economically depressed areas of the State..." I'd just like to know if you -- if you are capable, if you are willing to explain what the difference might be if the language were changed, that one word "may" to the word "shall".

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Hendon.

SENATOR HENDON:

Thank you, Senator Noland. First, let me say, there's a lot of language in here against cannibalization, against putting one of these new riverboats near another riverboat. We're -- we're intelligent enough to know that that is counterproductive. It does not maximize the income potential for the State of Illinois. And for legislative intent, let me make it very clear that as the sponsor of the bill, it is not my intent for any of these riverboats to go near another riverboat, which would really be reprocessing the same money. It makes no sense. And we've given the Gaming Board the latitude and the directive. And that's why I put it in for legislative intent, to not put these boats in a way where they'll be -- do -- just refurbishing -- I mean, regenerating the same moneys. They have to be placed where they're in the best economic -- make the best economic sense for the State. And even though it wasn't a question, I have to say to my esteemed colleague, Senator Meeks, who I have nothing but love for, and if I leave this earth before him, you know, he most certainly can preach my funeral, but let me say this, we

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understand the depressed communities are -- are on the boats maybe too often. That's why there's a depressed communities fund in here, which I put in the bill, which President Jones supported, for depressed communities, so that we can have economic development for depressed communities. And let's not fool ourselves, the number one -- the worst bridge in the -- in the State of Illinois and one that's high -- traveled the most is in my district, on the Congress Expressway going into downtown. That bridge, out of a structural rating of one hundred, is a two - a two. So let's not think that capital is just for Republican areas. We need capital everywhere. We need that bridge repaired and many others. So I took that into consideration and that's why the capital is for all over the State. Senator Noland, I'll be happy to answer...

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Noland.

SENATOR NOLAND:

Thank you. Just to follow up and hopefully for the purpose of clarification, Senator Hendon. If the word "shall" were inserted there, were replacing the word "may", how would that change the behavior or the considerations the State Gaming Board might take?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Hendon.

SENATOR HENDON:

Well, Senator, the -- the word "shall" versus "may", I understand where you're coming from. Shall is a -- a little stronger, but I have confidence in the Board -- in the Gaming Board. Also, we need to understand that the -- the Gaming Board,

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I believe, will -- will look at this. They've -- they've already been -- given a directive to not place these boats close to each other so we -- we wouldn't get new revenue. We want to get new revenue, capture new revenue. That's why they have to be far apart and I believe the -- the Gaming Board will act accordingly.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Noland.

SENATOR NOLAND:

And if I may, just as a last question, you recognize that after this bill is passed here and if it's passed by the other Chamber, that we no longer have any control over what the Gaming Board may do, correct?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Hendon.

SENATOR HENDON:

Actually, it is at their discretion, but we do have influence over the Gaming Board. They all have to come up for reappointment. They all come back. I happen to be Chairman of Executive Appointments. And any -- any member of the Gaming Board who goes against the legislative intent, which I've made clear on this Floor, I think would be putting themselves in a very precarious situation if they ever have to come back before my committee. And if there is a -- a ensuing lawsuit, legislative intent takes precedent in the courts.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Noland.

SENATOR NOLAND:

Just to conclude and to speak to the bill: I have to say that I don't share the opinion of my colleague Senator Dillard,

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although I do recognize much of the validity of what he said. But I do not believe that if we vote -- do not vote for this bill, we do vote for the capital bill, that somehow there is a disparity there. You can be for capital. I recognize the need to build our roads, to -- to replace our bridges and to provide for all the infrastructure that this State desperately needs. But I also believe that Senator Meeks has spoken to the issue. Believe that there have been a number of alternatives placed on the table here. And I know that I have taken an informal poll here in this Chamber regarding - and I will say the word - income tax. And I understand that this Chamber could address that issue here and come up with a valid and credible alternative to this means of addressing our capital needs here. So, I -- thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Pankau.

SENATOR PANKAU:

Thank you, Mr. President. Will the sponsor yield for a question?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Sponsor indicates he will yield.

SENATOR PANKAU:

Senator, in the earlier version that passed this Chamber to the House on the gaming bill, there was a provision in there that was taken from a bill I had filed that talked about no one voting on this measure being able to benefit or profit - or any family member - from the issuance of license and gaming, et cetera. Is that provision still in this bill?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Hendon.

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SENATOR HENDON:

Thank you -- thank you for the question, Senator Pankau. Yes, it is in this bill. And it's -- in fact, it's even been strengthened and it's also been strengthened to deal with the -- the Chicago situation, with the ownership there on that Board. No family member, no Member of the Legislature, no family member can benefit financially from -- from what we do here tonight.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Pankau.

SENATOR PANKAU:

So, Senator, the -- the provision only applies to the Board though, not to the licenses or the casinos themselves or riverboats?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Hendon.

SENATOR HENDON:

Senator, that only applies to the casino. As I understand it now, some of the language that you're talking about may not be in the bill. Some is and -- and some is not.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Pankau.

SENATOR PANKAU:

Would your staff person mind if I came over and talked to him and just asked about it? Okay. Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Risinger.

SENATOR RISINGER:

Thank you, Mr. President. For five years, I've served in this General Assembly and -- and each of those years I've felt

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that it's important that we look to do a capital program. I think one of the responsibilities of the -- of the State government is to take care of the infrastructure, both the schools and the highways and bridges. I think it's important to the citizens to feel safe in those buildings and to feel safe across those structures. But by the same token, you have to pay for those. There are other funding sources that I could support, but those funding sources are not in front of us today. We have a Governor that has indicated that he will veto other types of sources for funding. So this is the one that's in -- in front of us. It's one that I support. It's one that I think that we need in order to put together a capital program that is responsible and is fair and spread across this State. I urge that -- that we support this funding source, because we cannot continue to go on and let our infrastructure go. Because you know if you have a leak in your roof and you don't repair it, before very long you have to start replacing the whole structure instead of just a few shingles. Well, we're at that stage right now with our infrastructure. And if we do not pass this and move forward, then we're going to be paying a -- a -- a greater price in the future, and I think it is our responsibility to do that. And I urge all of you to support this funding source because it is the source that will get us the capital program that we so sorely need.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Jacobs.

SENATOR JACOBS:

Question of the sponsor, please, Mr. President.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

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Sponsor indicates he will yield.

SENATOR JACOBS:

When we passed the first riverboat gaming bill, it was for economically depressed communities. I'm a little concerned about this line here that says that riverboats shall be -- hold on -- blah-blah -- location of riverboats shall be determined by the Gaming Board to generate the highest revenue to the State. Does that mean if a casino comes open in East St. Louis, that the State may take that out of East St. Louis to find a place where they can make more money? Or is that not your intent?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Hendon.

SENATOR HENDON:

No. They -- they couldn't do that. This is only as it relates to the new -- two new riverboats, and to place a riverboat near a riverboat would -- would -- goes against this legislation.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Jacobs.

SENATOR JACOBS:

I just want to make thing -- one thing very clear. I think that Senator Meeks -- Dr. Reverend James Meeks' point is very -- a very good one. I would much prefer doing another kind of tax other than a tax against the poorest people in Illinois, because don't kid yourself, that's what we're doing. And, my friends on the Republican side of the aisle, listen up real close. You are voting for land-based casino gambling. That's what you're voting for. I'm for land-based casino gambling. I'm for it. We already have gambling in Illinois. But let's be clear about what

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it is we're doing. We're adding ten thousand new gaming positions in Illinois. And we're going to make the horse tracks of Illinois debtors. We're going to pay them a fee from the riverboat gaming and give the people who own the horse tracks a good chunk of money. What are we doing for the horsemen? Is there anything in there for the horse tracks to make money on their own or are we just going to make them a -- a welfare state?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Hendon.

SENATOR HENDON:

The horse racing industry in this State doesn't have many friends more friendly to them than me here. I mean, I -- I talk to 'em all the time. I meet with 'em all the time. Some of 'em have become very good friends of mine. I've been a defender of theirs as it relates to gaming. So, we did take care of them in -- in this bill and that's why they supported the bill and slipped for the bill in -- in committee.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Jacobs.

SENATOR JACOBS:

Senator, I would only hope that when this bill slips through the Senate today, because it's -- it's on the skids and it's going, and it reaches the House, that if a House bill comes back over, that we have further negotiations and those negotiations ought to include letting the horse tracks fend for themselves. I just don't understand why we would take a great industry like the horsing industry and just tell them, "look, all you're worthy of is a handout." Let's let these people compete the same as everyone else. And I also don't think -- I also think we ought

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to take a hard look when this bill comes back regarding the cannibalization rules. I -- if my goal is to protect the largest casinos in Illinois and to make sure that they don't have any competition, this is the bill. Now, I'm going to vote for this bill because I favor land-based casino gambling, and especially for the City of Chicago, and it's going to provide a lot of money to downstate projects and that's very, very important. And I was in the room when the Mayor first said he didn't want to be in the bill and now he wants to be in the bill, and I want to help him. But lets not kid ourselves, when this bill comes back over from the House, let's make sure that everybody is taken care of, 'cause I won't be so friendly next time.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Syverson.

SENATOR SYVERSON:

Thank you, Mr. President. I want to join in the others in echoing the fact that there is a need for a capital plan in our State. And there is no perfect funding stream, but I think it's important to understand that we have five states that surround Illinois, all who have declared war on our State, all who market in our State, all who come after our businesses and, clearly, by looking at the gaming that they've established right on the borders, are marketing and going after our citizens. And so gaming is here and the proposal that's put together tonight, while it's not perfect, while it's not -- doesn't have all the things that I would like to see in it, it addresses some of those issues. And frankly, the positions that they're talking about, or locations, are really more of a defensive mode if anything else to stop what's happening in other states. And so I think

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it's important for us to support this as a revenue stream to help pay for the capital plan. And again, it's important to point out that if there was no gaming in the country, that would be fine, but when we have five states around us that are aggressively going after us, I think this is a -- an important way to defend against that, plus have the revenue stream. And I would like to thank Senator Hendon for his months of -- of patience and work on this legislation. And I certainly appreciate your honesty and openness and willing to work with both sides on this -- on this bill, as well. So -- so, thank you very much and I plan on supporting this legislation.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Sandoval.

SENATOR SANDOVAL:

Thank you, Mr. President and Members of the Illinois Senate. I -- I stand -- as we started the debate this evening, there was a ray of sunshine in the Chamber of the Illinois Senate. In fact, it was so bright that I was quite amazed that on a late September evening that there'd still be lots of sunlight coming into this Chamber. And, boy, don't we know about sunlight. For eight months and for four months -- three months in the overtime Session, we talked about transparency and talked about sunlight, sunshine. There were bills that were filed by a number of Members, of my colleagues on this side of the aisle, who said that we needed transparency and sunshine in Illinois, that, you know, if we were ever to vote on a bill -- on a budget bill, that there was a need that -- for time to look at the numbers and to look at the facts and -- and bring sunshine and transparency to the process. Well, I guess everyone must have been sunburnt over

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the overtime Session, because no one's asking anymore for sunshine and transparency. It was just an hour ago that we became aware of this mega-casino bill. Just an hour ago, we all became aware that there was this mega-casino bill, and not one Member of this august Body, this -- has stand up and said, "Well, what's in it? What is -- what's in it for the people and the working families of the people of Illinois?" I say to Members, my colleagues, and I give credit to the -- those who have worked on this bill, my hat off to you. You really have got us all very blinded by the need to do a capital bill today. I ask you the question: After eight long months, almost nine long months of work here in the Illinois Senate, after nine long months, after hours of debate, after issues and hearings, the best we can do today after nine long, arduous months of work is to come up with a mega-casino bill for the people of Illinois. Whatever happened to relieving the overcrowding of our school districts on the southwest side of Chicago? I had received a commitment by the Governor to fund a bill, to create a bill to relieve overcrowding on the southwest side of Chicago. Governor, where are you? I was told that we would resolve the transportation crisis. We have spent the last -- at least the last thirty days hearing from constituents back at home, from DuPage to Cook County to down south, that we need to take care -- we need to roll up our sleeves and take care of the transit crisis affecting the people of Illinois. In fact, the time bomb is still ticking - ticking, ticking, ticking. And you know what? The best thing that this Governor can do is come up with an advance payday loan to resolve the transit crisis in Illinois. And we stand here -- we stand here condoning that behavior, condoning that type of voodoo

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public fiscal policy - voodoo public fiscal policy - by -- not coming up ourselves with a long-term solution to the transit crisis for working families, for children, for seniors. Have we forgotten already that the priority back home is not more pork, but the transit crisis affecting our people? It was just a few weeks ago that I heard from families in my district that the Governor cut funding for our schools on the southwest side. He cut funding to build more charter schools. He cut funding for afterschool programs. He cut funding for social programs. He cut funding for the needs of the working poor and of the indigent. He cut funding for poor folks, needy folks, and we sit here today giving him another credit card, another credit card worth billions and billions of dollars, and still we have yet to resolve the transit crisis. We have still yet to resolve school construction for those who most need it. 1.4 billion dollars for school construction is what -- what is purported. That means for Chicago, that means a hundred million dollars each year over the next three years -- a hundred twenty-five million dollars each year for Chicago public schools. That means that the Chicago public school district, one of the largest school districts in this country, will get to build one high school - one high school over the next three years for the Chicago public schools. I am glad that we are going to resolve the crisis of school construction with this mega-casino bill and we will get to build three high schools for the people of Chicago. It is a shame. It is a disgrace that after nine long months the best we can do here today, without resolving the transit crisis, the school crisis, is to further burden the taxpayers and tax the working poor of the State of Illinois. I -- my hat's off again to those who have

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worked on this bill, but this -- I will not and I cannot vote on something like this mega-casino bill, which is bad public policy, poor fiscal policy and, quite frankly, just voodoo governance.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Righter. Senator Hendon, we got couple more speakers and we're trying to finish and you can do it on your closing. Please. We got a couple more speakers. Please. Please, Senator Hendon. Please. You can -- you can do it then. Senator Righter.

SENATOR RIGHTER:

Thank -- thank you, Mr. President. Will the sponsor yield, please?

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Sponsor indicates he will yield.

SENATOR RIGHTER:

Senator Hendon, first, the previous speaker made some comments about the transportation crisis in Illinois. I know there was -- there is language in this bill and I assume that there is appropriation authority in a bill that might be coming later with regards to the RTA and the CTA. I wonder if you can enlighten the Members of the Body a little bit about what's in these bills and the arrangements that have been put forth.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Hendon.

SENATOR HENDON:

Thank you, Senator Righter. There's a lot of money in here for RTA. There's money in here for CTA. There's money in here for school construction. There's money in here for overcrowding. Despite the previous speaker, we put money in here for his

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community anyway, because it's for his community not for that particular individual. So, the money's in here for RTA. The money is in here for CTA. The money is in here for school construction. The money is in for early child education. I don't -- I -- I just don't understand some of the previous speakers, especially the last one, when they act like there's no money in -- in here for those issues. They are here. They are in it. I didn't call anyone's name. So, I hope the President doesn't do for them what they wouldn't do for me. And I'll be happy to answer your other questions.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Righter. Senator Righter. Senator Righter.
Senator Righter.

SENATOR RIGHTER:

Thank you, Mr. President. Senator...

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Righter. Senator Sandoval, you're out of order.
Senator Sandoval, you're out of order. Senator Righter.

SENATOR RIGHTER:

Thank you -- thank you, Mr. President. Senator Hendon, I want to go a little further on the transportation issue. It is my understanding that this bill, in -- in combination with the appropriation bill that will be coming later, affords the RTA in the neighborhood of two hundred million dollars, and there is a -- a payback provision contingent in that. Can you -- can you please provide a little more detail with regards to that, Senator Hendon? I think that's important to a number of Members on both sides of the aisle about what the arrangements are in this legislation.

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PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Hendon.

SENATOR HENDON:

...Righter, the RTA would be required to pay back the two hundred million over the course -- course of twelve months and they will have to put into their budget the -- this repayment, which will be tied to a recurring revenue source, which we will help them get to.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Righter.

SENATOR RIGHTER:

Thank you, again, Mr. President. Senator Hendon, from when the -- this process started, when we were trying to put together this legislation, there have been some significant suggestions about ethics reform, particularly in the areas of conflict of interest concerns and, if you will, putting some sunshine on the process a little bit with regards to who's going to be making decisions in this regard. They fall generally into two categories: those who will be part of the Gaming Board and those who will be part of this newly formed Chicago Casino Authority. I wonder if you can walk through or touch on some of the reforms that have been put in this bill, please.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Hendon.

SENATOR HENDON:

Thank you, Senator Righter. And let me say I support the Republicans who put in the -- the -- the reforms. It's good reforms. As far as the Gaming Board is concerned, it prohibits any member of the Gaming Board from engaging in any political

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activity. Two, it limits the Gaming Board members' financial interests. As far as conflicts of interests, under current law, neither the Gaming Board members nor their family members can be -- have a financial interest or do business with the casino, any operation. Our language, which you all put in, extends this -- prohibition to any business entity in any way involved in any gaming operation. Number three, it prohibits the Gaming Board members from holding any other public office. This is also new, put in by -- by that side of the aisle. Our proposal prohibits the members from holding any other public office irrespective of salary. Number four, it requires that the Gaming Board -- that the Gaming Board adopt, by rule, a code of conduct. All of these are good reforms, especially since we're giving them more authority. The Chicago Casino Authority, pretty much the same thing. The Chicago Casino Authority, as proposed, prohibit an Authority board member from having a financial interest, with a few exceptions, in any contract awarded by the Authority. Number two, the Authority, as proposed, allow for an exception to the financial interest prohibition if, and only if, the interest is seven and a half percent or lower. We're requesting that the threshold now be one percent. We propose the -- the -- the deletion of language which defined financial interest in the board in a way creating loopholes, to close the loopholes. We added subcontracts to it as well, requiring now a biannual management audit of the Authority to be conducted by a certified CPA. And -- and number six, require the Authority to maintain an online procurement bulletin so people can go online and see exactly what they're doing in that area. And I thank you for your questions, Senator Righter.

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PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Lightford.

SENATOR LIGHTFORD:

Thank you, Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senate. To the bill: Senate -- Mr. President, I rise in support of this legislation. I'm certainly sure that this would not have been my first choice of revenue for anything related to education, but we cannot sit here and go another year without school construction and maintenance for our schools. We have twenty-four school districts who have -- who was committed funding over five years ago, and they're still waiting for their support. Year after year we get to the same position and we do nothing. And so I rise in support of this because those twenty-four school districts need the support that was committed to them over five years ago. I rise in support because we have schools that have no air conditioning, we have schools that have no support, they need new boilers, the windows need repairs. And we have a great maintenance program where these school districts would be able to get some support for upkeep of the buildings. I also find it to be really important that CTA and RTA mass transit will not fold. We have many constituents who depend on public transportation to get them to and from their employers. And it's really important that we support that concept as well. And then with local repairs, I applaud the President for including municipalities with local repairs, because most of the times our communities only can get help with State roads, but yet they do not have enough revenues to fix up the rest of the potholes and all of the other troubled areas in their communities. And so it's so very important that some of this money would allow many

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of our local municipalities to do repairs in our communities that so need it. The argument of gaming versus any other revenue stream, sure I would have been in support of some other avenues for education a long time ago. But just being mindful where we are at this point, what's presented before us, I rise in support of it and I encourage an Aye vote.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Trotter. Senator Trotter, at Senator Ronen's desk.

SENATOR TROTTER:

Thank you very much for your indulgent {sic}, Mr. President and Members of the Senate. I would like to make a -- a couple points that have been made and reiterate some that have been made and some new points. Firstly, we as Legislators, as been pointed out from both sides of the aisle, have a responsibility, a responsibility to enhance and enrich the quality of the life of the citizens of the State of Illinois. We enhance their lives by passing meaningful legislation which will make that qualitative difference in their lives. We enrich their lives by ensuring that we give them and create environments that they play in and where they live and also work that are safe. This legislation, this bill, will allow us to have a revenue source to do that - something that we have not done over the past five years. We have sort of, at this juncture, mixed a couple bills together. This is the revenue source. This isn't a capital bill. We'll hear about the capital bill and all the wonderful things that this revenue source will pay for, can pay for, needs to be paid for. So, on that point, I also want to make clear too, let's -- and -- and it -- and for whatever, just for the cameras or what, let's stop the hypocrisy. Those who are up jumping and shouting

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the most about that we're doing this on the backs of poor people, well, if you -- if you look at some of those speakers, they have boats in their own areas. They're talking about we don't need to expand gambling. Why? Because you just want it all for your district? Well, I mean, that's one issue, but the other is, look what we're trying to create with creating a casino in the world-class City of Chicago. People come to the City of Chicago to visit our zoos, our museums. They come to see the -- the -- the architecture. They eat in our restaurants, and when they -- they come there to spend money, because this is a jewel of America. We're giving 'em other opportunities to have fun in the City of Chicago. Those who don't want to go on the lakefronts, those who don't want to go on the bus rides, well, we're giving them another opportunity to come and have fun in the City of Chicago. Excuse me if that means they're going to leave their money here that's going to pay for our schools, that's going to pay for our roads, which takes off the yoke of the individuals of coughing -- or the poor people who have to come up with more dollars paying income taxes or sales taxes and all of that. Excuse me, what's wrong with that? You don't leave money on the table when you need it. You don't leave food on the plate when you got to have it. We have to have a funding stream to pay for our maintenance needs and our building needs here in the State of Illinois. This does it. All of that stuff that we've done over the past nine months, as we go into the tenth month, is past - not going to happen. We can go ahead and jump up and down and be mad as hell about something that's not going to happen and all that's going to do is give us something that's not going to happen going forward. This bill, this funding stream, helps us go forward in

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the next four years to come. If you had a bill, if you had a issue and you didn't pass it in the last nine months, well, if you get reelected because you've done something and deserve to get reelected, well, you can pass it again next year. These are protracted battles, doesn't happen overnight. I would have loved to get here and to made this a better place. We all try to start there. But the thing is, is we have one hundred and seventy-seven Members in the General Assembly with a hundred and seventy-seven ideas and if you can't convince the other one seventy-six, then you just have to try again next year. We have a bill that I believe can make a difference in the quality of life of the people that we serve. We have an opportunity now to really do something for the citizens of Illinois. We're addressing transportation with the two hundred million dollars. It's a temporary fix, but they need operational dollars and that's why we're giving it to 'em out of these revenues. It's not construction dollars, but we're finding two hundred million dollars that's going to allow the people back home at least to have some kind of peace of mind until we come up with that dedicated revenue stream that's going to get them on their way. But that dedicated revenue stream, if you saw today's Tribune, isn't the panacea to what's -- they need to do. They have to do their homework back home as well. The problem is not just no funding; it's how you spend those dollars. And we're going to get these dollars there. We're going to oversight {sic} how they spend 'em and they're going to give us our moneys back. So this certainly is a good day - today on the 18th of September - to get the job done. So I ask all to vote for it. My -- finally, if you -- again, my final indulgence, Mr. President, is just to talk

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about the legislative intent of this bill and a certain aspect of the bill. For purpose of that intent, in history and as many of the legislative findings of this bill make clear, the specific rates for the impact fee imposed by this bill are based on different levels of gross receipts for the riverboat casinos and Chicago casino. Those differences are important and the decision to vary the rates based on those differences is directly related to the purposes served by this bill. I do direct the attention to all in this Chamber to one particular legislative -- legislative finding contained in this bill {sic} (amendment) at page 36, lines 18 through 26, and page 37, lines 1 through 6. And I quote from that: That the particular impact fee included in this amendatory Act of the 95th General Assembly is designed to balance the two primary goals of this legislation, which are (i) to promote and expand the -- vibrant gaming industry in Illinois and (ii) to, at the same time, recognize and counteract the significant impact that riverboat and casino gambling has had on the horse racing industry, which is so -- also important to the agricultural and tourism and jobs in Illinois. Thus, the rate of the impact fee is slightly higher for riverboats and casinos receiving greater gross gaming receipts, which necessarily have the greatest impact on horse racing, and somewhat lower for riverboats and casinos with lesser gross gaming receipts, the -- economic viability of which could be threatened by a higher -- impact fee liability. Thus, the fee imposed by this bill complies with the uniformity requirements of the Illinois Constitution and with constitutional provisions requiring due process and equal protection of the laws and provisions prohibiting special legislation. This is a good bill.

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We have two others to go to do the right thing for the people of Illinois, and I ask for its passage.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Thank you. We have two final speakers. Leader Watson and then President Jones. Leader Watson.

SENATOR WATSON:

Thank you very much, Mr. President. And that was well said by Senator Trotter. I want to, first of all, thank Senator Hendon. You've worked hard on this for a long period of time. Senator Jones, President Jones, thank you, and -- and certainly the Governor for bringing everybody, at least on this side of the -- of the Rotunda, together to talk about what is an issue that I think is very important to the future of this State. As you all know, and anybody that's followed the debate here over the last several months, this caucus on this side of the aisle just really isn't necessarily enamored with the expansion of gambling. We just have some philosophical problems with that. And I do also. I've not been a great supporter of gambling over the years and -- and feel that, you know, this is a major step for us to be supporting this -- this effort. But it is the only game in town right now and it is a manner by which we can fund this particular program. Now, let me just mention one thing, and I think that it's important, and Senator Trotter talked about a world-class city and he mentioned Chicago. Obviously, we all know that. But -- but if you look to see what is the largest state in this country that has revenue from gaming, and of course, the answer is Nevada. The next one, well, you'd say, "Well, who's number two?" Well, most people would say New Jersey, or maybe Mississippi or Louisiana, but it's not. It's Indiana. It's

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Indiana. And where do those people come from? I mean, we see buses literally come by the hotels and pick up those tourists and take 'em from their hotel over to northern part -- northwestern part of Indiana. They are the second-largest grossing state in revenue in gaming. And a lot of it -- a great deal of it comes from this State. So, sure, a world-class city ought to have the opportunity, as you've mentioned, Senator Trotter. And it doesn't necessarily mean that the people who will -- who will gamble there are going to be the less fortunate. The tourists who come to this State, who participate in the -- the amenities of the City of Chicago, will be participating in this casino. Horse racing, a huge issue for us downstate, and it's a huge issue all over. I'm not -- it's not a downstate issue. It's all over. But -- but horse racing is more than just the horses running around the track. It's more than just Arlington or Balmoral or Fairmount or wherever it might -- it's more than that. It's the breeders, the owners, the trainers, the horsemen, as we call it. This industry is really dying in Illinois. It truly is. You go to any track and you talk to the -- what's going on at those particular tracks and they're having a very difficult time right now filling out a card. At Fairmount, we used to have ten races, five nights a week. They're down to three nights a week and they're -- run eight races, is all they do, because they don't have the horses to fill the card out, to fill a -- a -- an actual meet. Where are those horses? They're in Indiana. They're in Iowa. They're somewhere else. Kentucky. And why is that? Because the purses in Illinois just aren't adequate enough to keep 'em here. There's a high cost of doing this type of business and they have to go where the revenue is

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best. And it isn't here. So this is a huge issue for us - the three-percent impact fee that goes to this -- to the horse racing industry. The horse racing industry probably was asleep when we talked about riverboats back whenever it was when all this passed, when they were talking about little paddleboats going up and down the Mississippi or the Illinois or the Wabash or wherever it might be. That isn't the case anymore. These people compete with the gaming dollar with the horse racing industry. And if we're going to protect the horse racing industry, which is a huge economic part of this State, then it -- the impact fee is fair. It's something that needs to be done. So -- and I appreciate you, Senator Hendon, pointing out the fact that the ethics language that we talked about here was -- was brought to the table by this side of the aisle. We feel very strongly about that. We want to make sure that we protect the integrity of the system and we can only do that through the quality of language that would be a part of this particular bill. So, with -- having said that, I think this is great for the future of the economy of this State, Mr. President. I think it's -- it's an opportunity for us to do a lot of good things. This is the mechanism to get it done and I urge everyone to vote Yes. Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

President Jones.

SENATOR E. JONES:

Thank you, Mr. President. First, let me thank the chief sponsor of this bill, Senator Hendon, for his hard work and all the things that he's done, the staff on both sides who worked on this legislation over the past couple of weeks, and my colleague who just got through speaking, Senator Watson, for sitting down,

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negotiating, seeing what we could do for the people of Illinois. I recognize that if we are going to solve the problems of this State, it'd take individuals working collectively together, giving and taking, negotiating and so forth. And that's what took place. The -- the northern region of the State need mass transportation, as well as capital. The southern region of the State need roads and bridges, and I -- I've heard folks talk about it, the schools, a capital bill. In order to have a capital bill, we must have a -- a revenue stream to fund the capital bill, to pay off the debt. This bill will provide 1.7-billion-dollar school construction bill, take care of overcrowding in the urban areas, take care of all those schools across the State that we speak or we pretend to speak about, where we said they have a need. Sure, we've been here nine months, and I ain't realized it, but the summer's gone. I enjoy being with my Republican colleagues over there. And these nine months I guess we've gotten a little closer, simply because we've come together in this Chamber to try and deal with a serious, serious problem. I saw one of the major newspapers in Chicago. They ran a story about the roads and the bridges in Illinois. That's what Senator Hendon was referring to. There are bridges in Chicago. And usually when the Tribune write, the reporters don't say everything I'd like for them to say, so I just skimmed the article. But I didn't realize, until we were discussing this issue in caucus yesterday, that the worst bridge in the State is located in the City of Chicago. And we going to sit around here and play dumb political games and not try and address the issues of the people of the State of Illinois. We must address those issues. This bill is a vehicle to get it done. I voted many

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years ago for the various taxes and may -- may have increased the registration of -- of vehicles, the -- the vehicle -- motor vehicle registration fee, liquor tax. I voted for all those taxes to help fund a major capital program. Those who want bridge repair, those who want road repair and construction, those who want our public institutions, our colleges and universities all across this State, must be willing to vote for a revenue stream to get it done. If you're not going to vote for a revenue stream, don't complain. Don't complain about the overcrowding of schools in the City of Chicago if you're not going to vote for a revenue stream to give the bonding to get the money to get it done. In this Chamber, I heard from many of my colleagues talk about those twenty-four school districts who passed referendums, who sit at the top of the list in Democrat, as well as Republican, districts, who are looking for those dollars. They didn't receive it 'cause the supplemental bill got to the Governor too late; it got past the lapse period. Those schools will be the first to be taken care of, the very first, but we need a revenue stream to get it done. The bill is not a perfect bill. And I've been here a few years; I have yet to see a perfect bill. Senator Meeks, you're going to give me a perfect bill, 'cause he had one that was pretty close. But sometime I voted for things I did not like, but I knew it was in the best interest of the people as a whole. So I swallowed my pride and went ahead and voted for it. I resent -- I resent the politics that been played on this issue. I respect each and every Member in this Chamber, but I resent, for political reasons, Members in this caucus got a telephone call telling them to vote against the capital bill. Don't have to call the name, but that's ridiculous

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for that to happen. Let's quit playing politics with school construction. Let's quit playing politics with the roads and the bridges. Let's quit playing politics with the infrastructure needs of the CTA. There are federal dollars waiting for us to come up with our match so we can deal with the rails and the buses and the safety for the citizens who use those facilities. This is a good bill. I enjoy working with Frank. Sometimes he made me quite angry. He's a -- he's a tough negotiator, but this is something that's going to take care of the people of Illinois. I know what happened in the other Chamber. One of the caucuses said we have to have capital. This is the vehicle which has been used to give capital so we can go ahead and pass this other bill, the RTA funding bill, so we can take care of mass transit downstate, as well as upstate. It's been a long, long day, done in -- done in the sunlight. I believe I had a caucus meeting - so did the Minority Leader have a caucus meeting - to educate the Members on what we had been working on for the past two weeks, out in the open, nothing to hide. That happened yesterday. So we just didn't bring this bill to the Floor today without prior discussion and input. This bill should receive a favorable vote from a -- a greater majority of the Members here. If you got projects that going to impact your district - and I can see you down there with all the cameras and the newspaper in your respective districts - you should be willing to vote for this bill. If you don't vote for the bill, I don't want to see your picture in the paper, saying, "Oh, I got this little press release coming out. I got this in here and so forth." No, no, no. Let's not play those silly games. Tell your constituents I voted for this, because I know you wanted that. And that's

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what's going to happen. I urge your favorable vote.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Hendon, to close.

SENATOR HENDON:

Thank you, Mr. President. President Jones and Leader Watson said it all. I could not come up with a close more eloquently than what they just presented. But I do want to just close by saying I want to give special thanks to Senator Clayborne, 'cause he worked very hard on this bill for a very long time. You've met with -- Representative Bobby Molaro, and even Lou Lang, even though he did something different when it went over to the other Chamber under orders. We knew they were under orders, 'cause Lou did negotiate with us in good faith. I also want to give a special thanks to Leader Watson and Assistant Majority -- Minority Leader Luechtefeld, and especially Senator Syverson, who -- I'm not always the easiest person to work with, but they worked with me and stayed patient with me and -- and we've made our way through this. And I just want to make -- reemphasize my commitment to Senators like Senator Jacobs, who disagreed with me on some points, but was nice about it, and Pastor Meeks, who I love and was at least nice about his position. I'm not going to be angry at anybody who votes against this bill, but I am going to keep my commitment that I made to individuals that I'm going to make sure that this is not just the Governor's decision on how we split up this capital. Those who I committed to that I will fight for you to make sure you get what you have coming for your vote, I'm going to do that. And even some of you who may vote against it, you know, I'll go in there and try to help you a little bit. But I'm not going to help you as much as the ones

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who give us the votes that they need. And I appreciate you. Sometimes, Frank, maybe we need every bill to need thirty-six, because it has brought us closer together - bipartisan cooperation. Maybe we need to have thirty-eight or every bill has to have bipartisan cooperation, because it's in the best interest of the State of Illinois. It's in the best interest of the people of this State. Let's do the right thing. We don't want to close down no routes in Chicago or raise the fares. We need capital. I urge an Aye vote.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

The question is, shall House Bill 2035 pass. All those in favor will vote Aye. Those opposed, Nay. The voting is open. Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Take the record. On that question, there are 37 Ayes, 15 Nays, 6 voting Present. House Bill 2035, having received the required constitutional majority, is declared passed. With leave of the Body, we will go to page 7 to House -- to Senate Bill 785. Order of Senate Bill 785. There has been a... 3rd Reading. Senate Bill 785. There has been a change of sponsors to Senator Schoenberg. Senator -- Senator Schoenberg, do you wish to proceed? Madam Secretary, please read the bill.

SECRETARY SHIPLEY:

Senate Bill 785.

(Secretary reads title of bill)

3rd Reading of the bill.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Schoenberg.

SENATOR SCHOENBERG:

Thank you, Mr. President. I'd like leave of the Body to

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move the bill back to 2nd Reading for the purposes of an amendment.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Schoenberg seeks leave of the Body to return Senate Bill 785 to the Order of 2nd Reading for the purpose of amendment. Hearing no objection, leave is granted. On the Order of 2nd Reading is Senate Bill 785. Madam Secretary, are there any amendments approved for consideration?

SECRETARY SHIPLEY:

Floor Amendment No. 1, offered by Senator Schoenberg.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Schoenberg. And can we please have a little quiet?
Senator Schoenberg.

SENATOR SCHOENBERG:

Thank you, Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senate. Floor Amendment No. 1 becomes the bill. It increases the General Obligation and Build Illinois Bond Acts authorization. I'd be happy to debate the bill in greater detail on 3rd Reading.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Is there any discussion? Senator Schoenberg moves for the adoption of Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 785. All those in favor will say Aye. Opposed, Nay. The Ayes have it. The amendment is adopted. Are there any further Floor amendments approved for consideration?

SECRETARY SHIPLEY:

Floor Amendment No. 2, offered by Senator Schoenberg.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Schoenberg, do you wish Floor Amendment 2 to be

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considered?

SENATOR SCHOENBERG:

Mr. President, I wish to table Floor Amendment No. 2.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Schoenberg wishes to table Floor Amendment 2. All those in favor, signify by saying Aye. Opposed, Nay. The Ayes have it. Madam Secretary, are there any other -- Floor amendments approved for consideration?

SECRETARY SHIPLEY:

No further amendments reported.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

3rd Reading. Madam Secretary, read the bill.

SECRETARY SHIPLEY:

Senate Bill 785.

(Secretary reads title of bill)

3rd Reading of the bill.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Schoenberg.

SENATOR SCHOENBERG:

Thank you, Mr. President and Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senate. It's very rare that I disagree with the Senate President publicly. In his earlier remarks, he said that the summer is gone, but in my view, if they're still playing baseball for keeps in Chicago somewhere, it must still be the spring. And this is the third and hopefully final version of the State's bond authorization bill for capital. Very briefly, this authorization increases, combined of the Build Illinois and general obligation bond authorizations, approximately 10.2 billion dollars: 1.265 {sic} billion for the general obligation bond authorization;

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1.972 billion for the Build Illinois bond authorization. This bond authorization provides a critical infusion of new capital dollars to meet the pressing needs of communities throughout the State. Provides long overdue spending for road projects, bridges and infrastructure across Illinois, which means economic development and jobs. It finally allows us to fulfill the long overdue promises to public schools, public universities, private colleges and universities, community colleges and early childhood facilities. It provides new resources for transit, including a hundred and sixty million dollars for Amtrak, environmental, water, energy development and technology projects. And finally, it provides new bonding capacity for statewide and local economic development initiatives. Want to make one additional observation, that this bill, in each Section for the spending increases, the provisions extend the authorization for twenty-four months, unless an act of the General Assembly will change that later. That is ordered to incentivize the timely processing and execution of all the commitments that are made with each of the respective agreements funded by these bonds. I'm happy to answer any questions. And I urge your favorable support.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Is there any discussion? Senator Watson.

SENATOR WATSON:

Once again, thank you, Mr. President. Appreciate Senator Schoenberg's work here. Just so everyone knows on this side of the aisle, the concern that we had about the bonding and how it was paid off and the whole issue of debt responsibility is a part of this legislation. So I appreciate Senator Schoenberg's consideration and hopefully we'll have fifty-nine Yes votes.

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PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Is there any further discussion? Seeing none, the question is, shall Senate Bill 785 pass. Those in favor will vote Aye. Those opposed, Nay. The voting is open. Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Take the record. On that question, there are 52 Ayes, 3 Nays, 1 voting Present. Senate Bill 785, having received the required constitutional majority, is declared passed. Senator Delgado, for what purpose do you rise?

SENATOR DELGADO:

Thank you, Mr. President. I missed the switch on that one. If I would have voted, I would have voted in the affirmative. I'd like to be recorded for the record.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

The record shall reflect your wish. With leave of the Body, we will turn to page 26 to Senate Bills 3rd Reading. Senate Bill 1110. Senator Sullivan, do you -- Senator Sullivan seeks leave of the Body to return Senate Bill 1110 to the Order of 2nd Reading for the purposes of amendment. Hearing no objection, leave is granted. On the Order of 2nd Reading is Senate Bill 1110. Madam Secretary, are there any amendments approved for consideration? Senator Sullivan, which amendments do you wish to be considered?

SENATOR SULLIVAN:

Thank you, Mr. President. I'd like to proceed to 2nd Reading for the purpose of hearing Amendments No. 5 and No. 6.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Madam Secretary, Senator Sullivan wishes to hear Amendments 5 and 6.

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SECRETARY SHIPLEY:

I have Floor Amendment No. 5, offered by Senator Sullivan and Trotter.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Sullivan, to explain your amendment.

SENATOR SULLIVAN:

Thank you, Mr. President. The amendment becomes the bill.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Can we please have quiet on the Senate Floor? This is a very important bill. Please have some quiet. Cut down the conversations please by the press box and all over. Please quiet. Senator Sullivan.

SENATOR SULLIVAN:

Yes. Thank you, Mr. President. This is the appropriation bill for transit, roads, school construction, et cetera. I'd be more than happy to discuss it on 3rd.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Is there any discussion? Senator Sullivan moves the adoption of Amendment 5 to Senate Bill 1110. All those in favor will vote Aye. Opposed, Nay. The Ayes have it. The amendment is adopted. Are there any further Floor amendments approved for consideration?

SECRETARY SHIPLEY:

Floor Amendment No. 6, offered by Senators Sullivan and Trotter.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Sullivan, to explain your amendment.

SENATOR SULLIVAN:

Thank you, Mr. President. This is a technical amendment.

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Again, I will discuss it on 3rd.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Is there any discussion? Seeing none, Senator Sullivan moves the adoption of Amendment 6 to Senate Bill 1110. All those in favor will vote Aye. Opposed, Nay. The Ayes have it. The amendments are adopted. Are there any further Floor amendments approved for consideration?

SECRETARY SHIPLEY:

No further amendments reported, Mr. President.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

3rd Reading. Madam Secretary, read the bill.

SECRETARY SHIPLEY:

Senate Bill 1110.

(Secretary reads title of bill)

3rd Reading of the bill.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Sullivan.

SENATOR SULLIVAN:

Thank you, Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senate. This is the third and final piece of the puzzle, so to speak, with regard to the capital appropriation bill. This is the actual appropriation bill itself. I'll go through it briefly and then open it up for questions. It is a -- the capital bill is a multiyear proposal, varies from one to six years depending on the -- the program, the department within the -- the program. And -- but I will be speaking mostly to this '08 capital appropriation, which is Amendment 5 and Amendment 6. The -- the capital bill, the total capital bill is in excess of twenty-five billion dollars, which includes State, federal and local

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resources. This bill will allow the State to capture 11.8 billion dollars in federal money. Over the course of the next fiscal years, the State of Illinois' portion will be 13.4 billion in capital projects. In this bill, Senate Bill 1110, it contains a total of 4.4 billion in new projects money for the Fiscal Year '08. Some of the highlights of the -- of the appropriation bill: With regard to lower education first of all, 259.7 million is included in the general State aid; 44.4 million for early childhood education. With regard to school construction, 1.9 billion over the course of three years with six hundred and forty-three million to be spent in Fiscal Year '08, with the first one hundred and forty-nine million to be used to pay for those school districts which were entitled since -- since 2002. We're all aware of those twenty-four school districts. Also, fifty million to be used for school maintenance grants. Ten million to be used to help construct early childhood school buildings. In the road program, we're -- we're looking at a 4.8-billion-dollar road program over the course of six years. Included in this year's is 1.3 billion for statewide road bridge construction projects. With regard to the transit, two hundred million is included for capital transit projects; thirty million for downstate capital transit projects; one hundred and sixty million for passenger rail, such as Amtrak; twenty-five million for airport improvements. In the transit operating portion of this bill is an additional two hundred million to be included for operating costs for the RTA and thirty million for downstate public transportation assistance. With regard to higher education, a total of five hundred and fifty million will go to the public universities. This is a one-year program. With

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regard to community colleges, one hundred and seventy-five million dollars. That's a three -- excuse me, a three-year program. Two hundred and fifty million over the course of three years, but a hundred and seventy-five million this year. And then two hundred million for private universities. I'll be more than happy to answer any questions.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Is there any questions? Leader Watson.

SENATOR WATSON:

Thank you, again, Mr. President. And no questions, just a comment, first of all. Thanks to Senator Sullivan and others who have really worked hard on this whole issue of the capital side of this, and that's the spending side. We won't be needing to twist any arms, I'm sure, on -- on this vote. Everybody likes to spend money. It's difficult to come up with the revenue to do so. But one of the things that I'd like to mention, if I could, Mr. President, about the multiyear road program. We obviously would -- would have like to have seen more money put into this. We've negotiated it upward, which I think is significant. We did add a local piece this week -- that's for what we call local roads. The townships, cities and counties, they're having the same problems obviously that the State is with rising costs and they need the revenue also. So we felt it was important and we added an additional five hundred million dollar for a local road component, two hundred and fifty of which will go through the formula - the Department of Transportation formula distribution based on roads and mileage and motor fuel tax and other -- population and other components of the formula. So, we think that's important. We also -- thanks to Senator Luechtefeld, we

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talked about raising the -- the amount of money that's for school construction. It was originally 1.5 million. We asked for an additional two hundred and fifty million. And by the way, that - - what that creates is an additional three hundred and fifty million. Twenty percent of the school construction program goes to the City of Chicago, public schools of Chicago. So that's three hundred and fifty million that will be made available for the construction needs and school needs and crowding needs of -- of Chicago. We also felt it was very important that we expand the community college component. 1999, I believe it was, or could have been even actually 1997 - I believe it was '97 - we passed the community college school construction grant program and it was a two-hundred-and-fifty-million-dollar program for five years - fifty million a year - to help those community colleges do away with old buildings and those that were there for temporary reasons. Unfortunately, that bill -- that -- when the Governor came in, he froze that program, but we've had most of those projects released. There's other needs out there for community colleges. We felt that was important also. The issue of the -- of the Leaky Underground Storage Tank Fund, maybe the - - not a sexy issue that people talk about, but it's a problem out there, an environmental problem where we've got some fifty million dollars in backlog that would be brought up to date, reasonably up to date, because we added another twenty-five million dollars in the bonding program for that particular environmental cleanup. So there's a -- there's a multitude of -- of other issues here. The civic centers were included. Most of us -- or many of us have civic centers in our region. There was a component put in here for them. So it's a -- it -- it's --

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it's far more broad reaching than what we talk about the traditional needs of transportation and roads and bridges, and we talk about school construction, and we talk about higher education and community colleges and the universities and colleges. It's much more of a component. It's much broader than that. So I think that, Senator Sullivan, once again, you should be commended on your work here and appreciate your consideration on our needs on this side of the aisle. And I urge a Yes vote.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Risinger.

SENATOR RISINGER:

Thank you, Mr. President. I also want to commend the Senator for his work on this -- this program. I think this program is important to all areas of the State of Illinois. When you take a look at the projects that are in here, these are important projects. They're -- they're projects that are needed. We're able to leverage the federal funds that our Congressmen got us for -- for projects that are very critical to all parts of the State. And we have worked long and hard on this. And so I urge an Aye vote. It's something that's -- that, really, I am very happy to see that we all come together to pass this very important thing for the State of Illinois and for the citizens.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

Senator Sullivan, to close.

SENATOR SULLIVAN:

Thank you very much. This has been a long, hard-fought battle, literally years in the process. And I have to say there is accolades that could go out to many, many people at this point. But the fact of the matter is, is that we have finally

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come together in a bipartisan fashion, which is what we should have done from the beginning. It has been difficult to get here, but we have finally arrived at -- where we need to be. I want to thank Leader Watson for his help and encouragement and support. Senator Risinger has been involved with many, many, many discussions. Senator -- or, President Jones for his support and many, many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. I want to especially give thanks to Senator Trotter for his expertise with regard to the budget and capital. Thank you so much for your support and help. I just want everybody to remember that this is a capital bill, but it's also a jobs bill. It's going to put people to work, good construction jobs. I ask for an Aye vote. Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

The question is, shall Senate Bill 1110 pass. Those in favor will vote Aye. Those opposed, Nay -- Nay. The voting is open. Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? Take the record. On that question, there are 58 Ayes, no Nays, none voting Present. Senate Bill 1110, having received the required constitutional majority, is declared passed. Madam Secretary, are there any Messages?

SECRETARY SHIPLEY:

I have a Message for the Governor by Joseph B. Handley, Deputy Chief of Staff for Legislative Affairs, dated September 17th, 2007.

Mr. President - The Governor directs me to lay before the Senate the following Message:

To the Honorable Members of the Senate, 95th General Assembly - I have nominated and appointed the following

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named persons to the offices enumerated below and respectfully ask concurrence in and confirmation of these appointments of your Honorable Body.

Rod Blagojevich, Governor.

PRESIDING OFFICER: (SENATOR LINK)

There being no further business to come before the Senate, the regular Session of the Senate stands adjourned until Wednesday, September 19th, 2007, in perfunctory Session and each Wednesday thereafter in perfunctory Session, until such time as the Senate assembles in Veto or other Session pursuant to the schedule established and published by the Senate President. The Special -- the regular Session of the Senate stands adjourned.