

IEA Pension Update for February 1, 2012

In Wednesday's State of the State address, Gov. Pat Quinn restated his belief that the Illinois pension problem, which, along with Medicaid, is having a major impact on the state budget, needs to be addressed in 2012. The key legislative leaders are echoing that belief.

Illinois Labor Pension Coalition

The unions representing the government employees who pay into the state pension systems intend to actively participate in the pension discussion.

IEA, the Illinois Federation of Teachers, AFSCME, SEIU and the Illinois AFL-CIO have coalesced around the belief that it is in the best interests of our organizations' members to be engaged with policymakers whenever and wherever changes in pension policy are being discussed. To that end, the labor pension coalition has been meeting with key players in the state pension discussion.

Recent meetings

On Jan. 24, representatives from the aforementioned labor groups met with Gov. Quinn for an informal discussion about his pension panel, a group he and the legislative leaders have constructed to offer proposals for addressing the pension issue.

It is anticipated that the labor unions will be invited to participate in the panel's discussions.

On Wednesday, following the governor's State of the State message, the labor coalition met with Illinois Senate Pres. John Cullerton (D-Chicago).

The Senate Democratic leader has said he wants to hear any ideas the unions can bring to the table to address the pension issue.

Cullerton has expressed interest in a much-discussed idea to shift pension costs from the state to local school districts. IEA has not taken a position on this idea. There have been no negotiations on changes in pension policy yet. No agreements have been made.

IEA principles

IEA has made it clear that the organization is willing to discuss only measures allowed under the IEA Legislative Agenda as approved by the Representative Assembly. In addition, a proposal must:

- Be constitutional
- Be fair to IEA members
- Maintain the stability of the state retirement systems.

[More on pensions](#)

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Nothing is more important to our members than retirement security. In the weeks to come, we intend to seek member input on pension proposals. IEA leaders and staff will fight as hard as possible to ensure that every IEA member gets the pension he or she has been promised and has paid for.

Please check the IEA Website (www.ieanea.org), the [IEA Facebook page](#) and the [IEA Twitter](#) account for updates.