

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

Speaker Madigan: "The House shall come to order. The Members shall be in their chairs. We shall be led... First of all, we ask the Members and our guests in the gallery to turn off laptop computers, cell phones and pagers and we ask our guests in the gallery to rise and join us for the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance. We shall be led in prayer today by the Reverend Milton Bost who is the pastor of the Chatham Baptist Church in Chatham, Illinois. Reverend Bost is the guest of Representative Brauer and the brother of our Member, Representative Michael Bost."

Reverend Bost: "I ask you to join me in prayer. Almighty and sovereign God, as the Illinois House of Representatives convenes today let our minds remember and let our thoughts acknowledge that there is but one who is sovereign and that one who is the author of the absolute truth. The task which this House has called to fulfill will require Your power and Your truth if it is to be done appropriately. Instill within these Leaders the commitment to serve You and the best interests of the people of the State of Illinois. Expand their vision to comprehend the fullest effect of the decision that they make. Grant Speaker Madigan and each Member of this House a mindset and a resolve to initiate correction and healing within the government of our state. If there be a way, holy God, let this Body see with Your eyes, let truth stand over preference, let right stand over convenience, let what is best stand over what is good, let what is honorable stand above what is lawful, let what must be done stand over what could be done. As our state watches, as our nation watches

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

and as our world watches, let this House today display a process of governance that honors You and fulfills the requirements of the Constitution of the State of Illinois. And as this process is fulfilled, let it continue until the wrongs and the ills of our present system are corrected. In Your holy and almighty name we pray, Amen."

Speaker Madigan: "We shall be led in the Pledge of Allegiance by Representative Michael Bost."

Bost - et al: "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

Speaker Madigan: "Roll Call for Attendance. Representative Currie."

Currie: "Thank you, Speaker. Please let the record reflect that Representative Dunkin is excused today."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Bost."

Bost: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let the record reflect all Republicans are present today."

Speaker Madigan: "The Clerk shall take the record. There being 115 Members responding to the Attendance Roll Call, there is a quorum present. Ladies and Gentlemen, before we begin... before we begin, let us introduce a new Member of the House effective this morning, Representative Wilzbach of Marion County. Mr. Wilzbach. Representative, you may want to say hello to your colleagues. So, turn on Mr. Wilzbach."

Wilzbach: "All I want to say this morning is that I am very proud to be here particularly at this moment in the history

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

of this state. It's quite an honor to be able to be a part of this along with the rest of you. Thank you."

Speaker Madigan: "On page 5 of the Calendar, on the Order of Resolutions there appears HR1671. Representative Currie."

Currie: "Thank you, Speaker and Members of the House. We stand here today because of the perfidy of one man, Rod Blagojevich. Exactly one month ago, the Governor was arrested by federal agents. The House permitted him a week to do the right thing, to do what should have been readily apparent that he should have done and that is to resign his office. He failed to do so. He declined the entreaties of lawmakers, constitutional officers, federal elected officials and the people of the State of Illinois to do so. Instead he said he would fight, fight, fight and he castigated us as nothing better than the political lynch mob. Well, we're anything but that and the best evidence to support that claim is the fact that he is still, for now, the Governor. A vigilante approach to Mr. Blagojevich's situation would have seen him impeached, convicted, and removed within days of his arrest. That didn't happen and the reason it didn't happen, despite the pressure and the inflamed passion of the people, is because we are a state of laws, a nation and a state of laws. The cornerstone of our democracy is the fair, free, and open election. To overturn the results of an election is not something that should be undertaken lightly. While our Constitution provides no clear standard for impeachment, merely saying 'cause', across jurisdictions generally impeachable offenses mean a significant abuse of power, a

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

betrayal of the public trust. It's not supposed to give us the latitude to impeach someone because we don't like his policies, because we don't like his style of governance, because we don't like the way he brushes his hair. Impeachment is reserved... this power is reserved for cases of allegations of serious infractions, serious betrayals. Our committee heard a great deal of testimony on the question whether the Governor exceeded the executive authority granted him by the Illinois Constitution. An occasional misstep, an occasional overreach might not rise to the level of impeachability, a continuing and serious disregard for the prerogatives of the Legislature and the Federal Government would. This Governor expanded health care programs over the expressed objection of the Legislature's Joint Committee on Administrative Rules, he contracted with a foreign company to buy flu vaccines with... in the face of federal prohibitions against importing those very vaccines leaving the citizens with no vaccine on the one hand and a \$2.6 million (\$2,600,000) bill on the other. He established an efficiency initiative without any controls, any standards, any oversight. We are also aware of the criminal complaint against the Governor and it is important to note that we're not a criminal jury. We don't need to find him guilty of a crime, even the crime of conspiracy to commit a crime. The Governor didn't appear before the committee; his lawyer did not refute that the conversations detailed in the criminal complaint reflected his own words. His lawyer described that language as talk, talk, talk has offered the gambit that they were not

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

properly obtained, a viewpoint that has gained little traction with the courts. But if that talk reflects the Governor's view that the plumbs of government are his to distribute not because they are in the public interest, but because doling them out to the right individuals will fill his campaign coffers or lead to jobs and salaries for himself and his wife, that to me is the definition of betrayal of the public trust. Bartering the appointment of a United States Senator for campaign or personal benefit, signing a measure favorable to the horseracing industry only if the industry ponies up substantial campaign contributions, dispersing fair payments for pediatricians who serve the state's poor children only if a hospital administrator writes a fifty thousand dollar (\$50,000) check to his campaign fund. These taken together are not merely talk, talk, talk. Instead they show a public servant who has chosen not to serve the public but only his own interests. They show a public servant prepared to turn..."

Speaker Madigan: "Representative Currie. Ladies and Gentlemen, could we end the conversations. Take your seats, please. Representative Currie."

Currie: "Thank you, Speaker. They show a public servant who's not prepared to turn... who is prepared to turn public service into an avenue for private benefit. They show a public servant who has betrayed his oath of office, who has betrayed the public trust, who is not fit to govern the State of Illinois. His silence in this grave matter is deafening. He declined our invitation to testify and tell

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

his side of the story. He scarcely addressed the citizens of Illinois, the people who elected him and put their trust in him to faithfully execute the duties of his office. All he's offered is the claim that he's done nothing wrong and he'll have his day in court. That, of course, is his choice, but with it comes severe consequences in this Body and for its Members who have also sworn to uphold the Constitution and provide the oversight necessary to ensure it and the laws of the state are upheld. The concern of this House, not just the liberty of one individual, the Governor, but the ability of government to preserve and protect the liberty of the thirteen million (13,000,000) Illinoisans we represent. In the considerate judgment of the special investigative committee, in a unanimous vote, due to his conduct, the Governor has failed to uphold the oath of... the oath of office, he has violated the Constitution and the laws of the state, he is no longer capable of defending our liberty. The totality of the evidence shows that Governor Blagojevich has forfeited his right to hold office; he should be impeached. Whatever their stations, whether petty thieves or Governors, those who break the law must not be immune from the consequences and must be held to account for their actions. I hope you will join me in voting 'yes' on this sad, difficult, grave, but very important Resolution that will help us dig ourselves out of the mess that the Governor has created."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Cross."

Cross: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think a lot of us may end up saying some of the same things throughout today, that's

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

inevitable. I want to first of all, and this was done yesterday in the committee, thank everybody involved in this process. It's not I don't think an enjoyable exercise, if you want to call it that, for anybody. But I looked and I watched the committee Members on both sides of the aisle handle themselves in an exemplary way and a professional way and I thank Representative Currie. On our side, I especially want to thank our Members and Jim Durkin who spent a lot of time and a lot of effort and a lot of energy and were able to find that fine line between fairness and due process and also moving in a de... not only a deliberate way, but in a quick way without violating that sense of fairness that I think even for those that we dislike intensely, they have a right to that and I think that fine line was found. And Representative Durkin, on behalf of our caucus, you did a great, great, tremendous job in leading our side of the aisle through a difficult and not necessarily pleasant task. So, thank you and to all our Members, thank you for what you did. I know you all gave up a lot of time and energy and it was maybe not always pleasant. And also, it always amazes me whatever differences we have in this Body, the talent of our staff and staffs, is incredible. They work tirelessly. They find things that no one else finds or at least we don't as Members. They hit different angles and they did in this process the best. And I want to thank our staff and I thank your staff for what they did in their work with us. They were remarkable and as well, the attorneys that gave us guidance over the last month. We had Tom Durkin and

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

Bill Roberts and you had a staff of attorneys, as well, led by Dave Ellis who did an incredible job. And for all of us going down unchartered territory and different roads that we're used to, that got us... led us through some bumpy times. So, thank you all for what you did. Representative Currie, really, I think, hit a lot of this for... kind of a capsule, but this is about two (2) things today and this report is about two (2) things. It's about the oath of office that this Governor took, amazingly he took it twice, and he sworn in to uphold the law. And comes with that also the privilege to represent, as the highest elected official in this state, all of us, whether we're Republicans or Democrats, to be Governor and we find ourselves in a kind of a, not necessarily difficult spot, but also having to uphold the Constitution as Members of the General Assembly to decide whether or not to impeach somebody and decide whether or not the person, this time the Governor, Governor Blagojevich, has violated that oath of office and has he lost the trust and the faith and the respect of the people of the State of Illinois. And unfortunately, for him and for all of us, the question is, of course, without a doubt, no question about it, he has violated that oath of office and that trust he was given by being elected twice has eroded, has evaporated, has completely gone. And as you'll look through this report, and I suspect many of you have, he's failed in his responsibility as Governor and you will see a pattern in that he repeatedly and systematically violated that oath of office. People in the state have a right to expect that

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

the government services that we pay for with taxes should never be for sale. These services and contracts are not tools to be manipulated; they're the law and they're to be followed. And as you go through this report, those numerous accounts... counts time and time again whether it's about a sale of a Senate seat or it's about the Chicago Tribune or Children's Hospital or a horseracing Bill, they're repeated violations of that oath of office, oftentimes, if not all times, for personal reasons and personal gain of our Governor. So, I don't think there's any question about the fact that he's violated the oath of office. The question of trust is to me is equally important as the oath of office and whether or not it's violated. Representative Bassi mentioned in committee yesterday that holding public office is a privilege and not a right and I think that holds true for all of us. And I had somebody ask me the other day, well, aren't you, as a Body, undoing what thirteen million (13,000,000) people decided in voting for the Governor, not all thirteen million (13,000,000). We have thirteen million (13,000,000) people, a certain number voted for him, more than the Republican candidate. We're not undoing anything; the Governor undid it. The Governor by his actions took away that privilege and took away that right, took away that ability to continue to be Governor. We're going through an exercise of having to impeach to remove him from office, assuming the Senate does that. But the issue of trust is not something we took away; he did that on his own. So, are we undoing what the citizens of this state

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

did by voting or electing him in? Yes, but only because of his actions. So, I think the trust issue like the oath of office issue has been answered and answered in the only way it can be met. I found the last month all of us going through different emotions. I think I've gone through a number of those emotions. You know, some say I'm disappointed; maybe that person voted for the Governor and feels like the Governor let him down. Though I would suggest to all of us in this Body that in the years to come, even though he won twice, we will be hard-pressed to find anybody that admitted that they voted for the Governor. You can go up and ask anybody down the road and they'll say, well, I didn't vote for that Governor. So, there's disappointment and legitimately so. Some are happy, some are happy to be turning the page and moving forward. Some are happy 'cause they don't like him. It's no secret the people in this state, especially in this Body, have increasingly gotten to a point of not liking him and are probably happy about today. And then we hear and I think we all say this, that this is a sad day for Illinois. It is a sad day for Illinois. There's this cloud hanging over us and it's understandable, it's a somber time and it's not something that we want to do and it's not something that we enjoy. You shouldn't enjoy what we're doing today. Even if you hate the guy with passion, this isn't pleasant. It shouldn't be something you revel in. This is a... this is a sad day, but I think the real emotion, when you think about all of what's gone on and what's all been alleged and what's in this report is trumped... it's not

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

necessarily about sadness or disappointment or happiness, you ought to be angry. You ought to be disgusted; you ought to be mad as hell, because this is our state. This is our system. Well, it's not ours, I mean, people gave us the opportunity by electing us to be part of this. I like this building, even all those days when we fight. I don't like that part of it, but it's the profession or that what we do is the service we do. I'm proud of the State of Illinois. And when we become the laughing stock of the country and in fact the world and people joke about the State of Illinois on Saturday Night Live or on late night TV, I'm not sad, I'm not disappointed, I'm mad. I'm angry. This is an embarrassment that somebody that holds this office, the most powerful office in the State of Illinois, has the audacity and is brazen enough to talk about selling a United States Senate seat. I was talking to somebody this morning, somebody breaks into your house and violates you, you're not sad, you're angry. You're mad. And that, I think, is the emotion and the feeling that I suspect, when you take away all the layers we all feel, because this is about as bad as it gets. And I think as we move forward regardless of our Parties, regardless of our ideology, we all have a responsibility to do what we can to eliminate that sadness and that disappointment and that happiness or that madness that we feel, 'cause this is about us, as well. This is about how people perceive us and it's not particularly good today. It's not particularly good for the people that elected us. It's... it is sad, but it's really more than that. So, I think we need to remember,

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

and this isn't a lecture, that public service should be a calling. It shouldn't be a business. And when you start talking about and believing that money drives this or that how I can help myself personally in my role or what can I get from it, you've lost the perspective and you've lost the understanding of what public service is all about and this Governor clearly has. I'm not sure what's going to happen in all the other issues he has, with respect to the oath of office and respect to trust, that is all gone. And unfortunately or fortunately, however you want to look at it, we have no choice today but to vote 'yes' on this Resolution. Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to speak."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Durkin."

Durkin: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker and Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. I want to thank the chairman of the committee, Representative Currie, who did an outstanding job of conducting a very thorough and fair committee process. It's probably one of the few times that I've witnessed in my life where we have worked in a truly and a bipartisan manner, we put politics aside, but when we.. the first day of that committee we all made an obligation and stated that we would be objective and we would hear the evidence and we would weigh the evidence that was brought before us. Now, when we think about what the responsibility of our committee is, it's basically is to investigate of whether.. to investigate whether or not cause.. whether there is an existence of cause to impeach the Governor. The Constitution states that the House of Representatives has

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

the sole power to conduct legislative investigations to determine the existence of cause for impeachment and by a vote of Majority of the Members elected to impeach executive and judicial officers. Now, I've heard some criticism over the... by counsel for the Governor that he was not afforded due process. Now, our Constitution doesn't state that the attorney for the Governor is allowed into the... and to participate in the hearings. The Constitution doesn't state that the attorney for the Governor is allowed to question witnesses. The Constitution doesn't state that the attorney for the Governor is allowed to rebut or mitigate the evidence that we've presented. The Constitution doesn't state that we are required to allow him to call witnesses, but we did. We ensured that we were going to be thorough, but also we ensured that we were going to be fair. The Governor failed to participate in those proceedings; we invited him and the Governor's attorney failed to rebut any of the evidence which was presented before this committee. And I will tell you that the evidence was overwhelming. The Constitution states that the Governor shall have the supreme executive power and shall be responsible for the faithful execution of the law. That power was not intended to allow the Governor to condition an appointment to the United States Senate in exchange for campaign contributions, employment or also other personal benefits. That power was not intended to allow the Governor to withhold eight million dollars (\$8,000,000) of duly owed Medicaid funds to Children's Memorial Hospital in exchange for a fifty thousand (50,000)

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

contribution. That power was not intended to allow the Governor to dangle state money in front of the Chicago Tribune if, and only if, a member of the editorial board was fired. And that power was not intended to condition the signing of horseracing legislation in exchange for a hundred thousand dollar (\$100,000) contribution. The list goes on about the various other things which the Governor did about violating Federal Law on a number of issues. But I will state this, that yesterday's actions and what I presume will be today's actions ensures the public and everybody in this state that a system of checks and balances works and is also the best form of government. I intend to support this legislation, but I will remind everybody that the House has done its job. The impeachment does not mean that the Governor will be stripped of his power or of his title. We will send over Articles of impeachment in which time the Senate will try to determine whether or not the Governor should be removed from office and I believe he should. Thank you very much. I appreciate the patience of the men and women who served on this committee. It was tough work, but that's our job. Thank you very much."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Fritchey."

Fritchey: "Thank you, Speaker, my colleagues. When I came down here twelve (12) years ago, I anticipated voting on a number of issues that would be important to all the people of this state, issues involving health care, education, jobs and we've done that and we've done good things over these twelve (12) years. Never did I anticipate nor would

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

I imagine any of us anticipated that we'd be casting the vote that we're about to today. As you've heard, those of us in the committee found a clear case of what happens when one man finds himself to be above the law. The report makes unfortunately clear what happens when you put self-interest before public interest. What happens is the people of Illinois suffer. They must suffer no more. While I know how we got here, we must soon turn our attention to where we go from here. Our institution has suffered; we've suffered major damage, but like the phoenix, this thing will rise from the ashes and what we will affirm to our citizens everything that's great about Illinois. Over four (4) years ago, I stood with Representative Black, Senators Miguel DeValle, Kirk Dillard, we introduced the first Bill aimed at ending pay-to-play politics in Illinois. And the road to that Bill, as the Representative can tell you, was oftentimes a long and lonely road, but we never stopped because we knew it was the right thing to do. And we proved that with determination and hard work the right thing will oftentimes triumph, but there is still more work to be done and I want to assure the people of Illinois and the people of this country that we will continue to do that work until that job has been done. My Illinois is not the Illinois of George Ryan and Rod Blagojevich. Our Illinois is the Illinois of Abraham Lincoln, Paul Simon, and Barack Obama. Over a century ago Abraham Lincoln said, just blocks from here, that a house divided against itself cannot stand. This House is not divided against itself; this House is

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

united. This House is united to right the wrong that's been done to the people of Illinois and this House is united to restore the faith of the people in State Government. More recently another Illinoisan restored hope in our entire country bringing us together in the belief in the common refrain of 'Yes, We Can'. I think it's fitting sincerely that when I drove here this morning the sun was shining brightly on the State Capitol and the sun was glistening off the Capitol dome and made me think that while we are closing the chapter on a sad period of Illinois government in our state history, we are starting a chapter on a new day. Each and every one of our constituents is looking to us, counting on us, relying on us to do what's right to bring back all that is good about Illinois, to bring that all that is good about our state. And we will do that and let me simply say to my colleagues, to the people of this state, when it comes to bringing back all that is good and right in our State Government and all that is good and noble in public service, it is not a matter of 'Yes, We Can', it's a matter of yes, we will. Thank you."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Lang."

Lang: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Governor's oath of office reads as follows: I do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Illinois and that I will faithfully discharge the duties of the office of Governor according to the best of my ability. The Constitution refers to the duties of the office of Governor by stating in Section VIII

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

that the Governor shall have the supreme executive power and shall be responsibility for the faithful execution of the laws. For the last several weeks, the special committee has been looking into whether the Governor has violated that constitutional oath and whether he has been faithfully executing the laws of the State of Illinois. I'm proud of the work of this committee. I'm also proud of the investment of time and effort by Members of the House who are not members of the committee who have read the reports, who have come to the committee, who have asked questions and for those of you who have not read the full final report that is on our desks today, you really should. You should because this is a report that not only outlines the worst in Illinois government; it also outlines the mistakes that we must learn from together. And it is instructive to read those documents and read those exhibits... I wouldn't read all of them, there are many pages... but the report should be read. We had some significant debate in this committee regarding due process, regarding the standard of proof and I think it's instructive to briefly talk about these things. First, as to due process, the Governor received an extraordinary, unprecedented level of due process in this committee. Many of you recall the Clinton impeachment hearings and we didn't see any lawyers representing President Clinton in the United States House of Representative committee studying that impeachment. We didn't see anyone there representing the President of the United States to ask questions of witnesses, to challenge what the committee was

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

doing and yet, we afforded the Governor's lawyer those opportunities, in fact he had three (3) lawyers in the room virtually every minute of every committee hearing. We afforded them the opportunity to ask questions and afforded the opportunity to challenge exhibits, to challenge witnesses. We afforded them the opportunity to call their own witnesses. In fact, we asked many times to have the Governor of the State of Illinois appear personally. And for those who want to look at this as a criminal tribunal, which is what the Governor's lawyer attempted to do, let me convince you today and now that this is not a criminal tribunal, there is no self-incrimination, there is no lack of inference by the Governor's silence, in fact, the evidence is and the case law is, as you'll see in the report, that the Governor's silence in the face of allegations that have not been refuted can be used against him. In fact, moreover, his lawyer by simply calling what was on those wiretaps chatter or jabber or just political talk, in essence, admitted that it was the Governor's voice that we heard on the wiretaps. He admitted that it was the Governor's voice on the wiretaps and so whether those wiretaps are ever entered into evidence in a federal courtroom whether the Governor is ever convicted in a federal courtroom is not our province in this chamber. Our province is to listen to the plain words of the Governor and weigh them against what we know to be good and right and just and above reproach and that's not what we see in those tapes from the Governor of the State of Illinois. And then the Governor's attorney wished to talk about the

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

standard of proof in these committees and he tried to raise what you might consider to be criminal court standards of proof: beyond a reasonable doubt, clear and convincing evidence, even a preponderance of the evidence, but the fact is that the Constitution of the State of Illinois says none of those things. The Constitution of the State of Illinois has one word as a standard for impeaching this Governor and that word is cause. And you will read in the report a long discussion of what cause means and in the end cause means whatever the 118 Members of the House individually think it might be. So, cause, Ladies and Gentlemen, is what you decide it is, not what the Governor's lawyer decides it is, not what you think from watching some television show regarding courtroom antics, but what you think cause is, that's up to you to decide. The Governor called no witnesses. Then the attorney for the Governor tried to convince the committee, unsuccessfully, that anything charged against the Governor that was noncriminal, noncriminal, needed to rise to the level of a criminal offense to be counted against him. And we pointed out then and the report points out and I point out now that there is no such law that says that, in fact, it's quite the opposite. An abuse of power, a violation of the gubernatorial oath, a violation of the Constitution is the same level whether it was an abuse of power because he committed a crime or an abuse of power because he violated the separation of powers or an abuse of power because he fraudulently sold... purchased flu vaccine for the State of Illinois knowing he would never take possession of it. All

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

of those things are the same; they are all potential 'cause' to allow us to vote to impeach the Governor of the State of Illinois. So, don't make the mistake, the general public should not make the mistake and the press should not make the mistake of making much differentiation between the criminal and the noncriminal. The criminal is more emotional, the criminal is sexier, the criminal is something people want to talk about, but as it relates to this chamber and this Governor and this decision we must make, the fact is that what he has done within government separate and apart from any crimes is just as important as the criminal allegations. Ladies and Gentlemen, I invite you to read this report. This report is about a Governor who is all about abusing his power, all about a narcissistic attitude that says, I'm the Governor, I will decide. And here we are on Richard Nixon's birthday and the truth is that this Governor sounds in many ways like Richard Nixon. I saw that movie that's out now Frost/Nixon and in one of those interviews Richard Nixon said, 'When the President does it, it's not illegal.' When the President does it, it's not illegal. That's Rod Blagojevich. That's what he has done as Governor and that's what he has done here. Whether it's the JCAR issue, which as you know, held up legislation in this chamber and the chamber across the rotunda for months, a JCAR issue where the Governor tried to create his own health care plan that the General Assembly did not approve, that JCAR did not approve. Whether it's about the energy efficiencies where IPAM received the contract and they weren't even a

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

legal entity yet in the State of Illinois and all of the other items. Each and every one of the seven (7) or eight (8) or ten (10) items listed in the Resolution, each of them, whether you use the lower standard of cause as listed in the Constitution or you use clear and convincing evidence or you use any other standard you wish, by any standard, the evidence in the record is quite clear that this is a Resolution we should all be voting for. Ladies and Gentlemen, we deserve better. It cannot just be about the fact that this Governor is thought to be maybe incompetent or doesn't do his job well; it's never been about that. It's been about his oath under the Constitution. He has violated that oath not only once or twice but repeatedly, a pattern of abusive power that I never thought we would see here in the State of Illinois and I hope we never see again. In my twenty-one (21) years in this chamber, this is the most important vote I will ever make; it's an unfortunate vote, but it's one that must be made. Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen, I strongly support the Resolution."

Speaker Madigan: "Representative Mendoza."

Mendoza: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. Today we're one day closer to healing the gaping wound inflicted upon the people of the State of Illinois by Governor Rod Blagojevich. Our state's reputation has been sullied and worse yet, people in our state have been seriously hurt by the unmeasured rapaciousness of this Governor. His greed and arrogance are only equaled by his brazenness and recklessness. He violated his oath of

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

office and the peoples' trust time and time again. Not only was it proper for this Body to create impeachment committee for the purpose that brings us here today, in fact, it was our duty to do so in order to protect the citizens of Illinois from the unfettered and the unbridled and dangerous abuse thrust upon them by Rod Blagojevich. Illinois's a great state with great history that has been served by august leaders like Abraham Lincoln and more recently, Barack Obama. These are great men who rose to the occasion honorably when history called upon them to do so, to serve the people of Illinois and our country but most of all and above all with honesty and integrity. I trust that history will be kind to them. Rod Blagojevich though is an (inaudible) to honor. His legacy will be one cloaked in shame and darkness. His name will forever be enshrined in history with the likes of others who have shamed the people they were elected to serve. It's amazingly fitting that Governor Blagojevich face impeachment today of all days on his self-admitted hero Richard Nixon's birthday. Their common bond of impeachment will unite them in history's dark annals of corruption, but even Nixon displayed more integrity than Blagojevich by resigning before he was impeached. The committee's report is astonishing. I was honored to serve as an alternate on the committee and listened to all of the testimony and studied all of the evidence with the utmost care and consideration. It's impossible for me to conclude anything other than an immediate need to impeach and to end this continuing threat to the health of our state. The Governor

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

has clearly, clearly been unable to govern for far too long. The report details many egregious abuses of power and violations of the peoples' trust by Governor Blagojevich. Whether it's his disregard for JCAR, his abuse regarding the energy efficiency initiatives, the guilty pleas and convictions of his friends: Ali Ata, Joseph Cari, and Tony Rezko on pay-to-play deals or his plot to sell the vacant U.S. Senate seat among many others as we know in the report. Perhaps the most repugnant abuse of all was his attempt to use sick specialty care needy children as extortion tools for campaign contributions. I sponsored House Bill 5331 that would have provided the eight million dollars (\$8,000,000) to specialty care pediatricians in Illinois. Governor Blagojevich promised, let me repeat that, Governor Blagojevich promised those physicians that money so that they could care for our sickest children. Those sick children, Governor, they're still waiting. They trusted and needed you and you abandoned them. Never in my wildest dreams could I have imagined that Governor Blagojevich would have pulled back funds for sick children in order to extort the president of the children's hospital. Repugnant is too kind a word to describe that action. And Governor, perhaps the last thing, the last decent thing you could do as Governor before your time runs out is to honor that promise that you made to those sick children and release those funds. Lastly, I'd like to tell the Governor that it's sad to have seen him squander the amazing opportunity entrusted to him by the people of this great State of Illinois. It's been

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

an ugly and shameful spectacle. Rod Blagojevich, you should be ashamed of yourself, but I won't pretend to think that you feel any. You've already shown us that you have none. So, take your sullied place in history and I hope your fate serves as notice where any other public official who even has a fleeting thought of following your example that they will be held accountable as well. I also ask of the good people of the State of Illinois to please not judge all of us based on the actions of this corrupt Governor. I understand it's easy to do so, but I sincerely hope you not lose all faith in our desire to be true public servants and stewards of your trust. For our state's future, for Illinois, let's all vote 'aye'. Thank you, Mr. Speaker."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Franks."

Franks: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wasn't sure what I was going to say today then I heard the other speakers and I... and I looked up and I saw Abraham Lincoln's picture at the front of the chamber and looked to the left and I see Stephen Douglas and I think of all the great people who have served in this state or have come from this state. The state that's given us Ulysses Grant and Ronald Reagan and Paul Simon and Barack Obama. And then I think about my time here in the General Assembly and I've served under two Governors. I've served under George Ryan and I've served under Rod Blagojevich. We can do better, yes, we can and we must do better and we will. I don't want my children and all the children in our state to grow up thinking that our politicians are corrupt and unfortunately, most of our

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

kids think that right now. Today we are taking the first step in taking back our government from the darkness and bringing it back to the light. The plague, and it is a plague that has been brought upon our state by Rod Blagojevich, will be lifted. This is a new day, a better day. This is a day where we will stand together and we will tell people that we will no longer tolerate the culture of corruption that has seized our government. And let's be clear, this is not a legal proceeding. This is a political process and it's our duty, it's our duty to clean up the mess and to stop the freak show which has become Illinois government. Now, Mr. Genson was arguing, as we heard from Mr. Lang, different standards in trying to make this into a legal proceeding which it's not. He attacked the witnesses; he attacked the evidence. At one point he said, Mr. Ata's a perjurer, Mr. Cari is an extortionist. Well, he should have gone further. Mr. Rezko was convicted of selling state jobs. Mr. Ata, as you remember, paid fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) and this wasn't an allegation, this was a plea of guilty. He paid fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) to get a job and he paid it to the citizens or friends of Rod Blagojevich. And you hear about Mr. Genson attacking these folks, saying that they're not credible and you think about the people who the Governor hung out with. He took fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) from Mr. Cari... from Mr. Ata. He's tried to shakedown Mr. Cari. His chief fundraiser, Mr. Rezko, was sitting in the penitentiary. His other chief fundraiser, Mr. Kelly, is about to plead guilty. His other associate

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

and fundraiser, Mr. Wyma is cooperating with the Federal Government. Mr. Monk, as well, is the subject of the wiretaps. Perhaps the Governor should hang out with people who aren't criminals. And this is a question now of whether... solely on whether Rod Blagojevich can continue to lead this state. It's obvious that he can't. Rod Blagojevich can't even talk to us. The only way we hear from Rod Blagojevich is when he communicates through his criminal attorneys. It's evident that he cannot carry out the constitutional mandate that he has as Governor of the State of Illinois. This report of the Special Investigation Committee is extensive, but it's probably not all inclusive because when we heard about the wiretaps... you have to remember, the wiretaps at the... they're at the beginning part of this report, were for a very short time. They were for about five (5) weeks. There is impending indictment that will be coming. There is no doubt that there is an impending indictment that will be coming probably within ninety (90) days. I think at that time there will be more shocking allegations and we will see more affidavits from officers stating illegal acts by the Governor. But we don't have to have... certainly, we don't have to rely on illegal acts. Sometimes when things are legal, they're still wrong and you can abuse your power without necessarily breaking the law. And if you look at the report, there is a litany... and I won't go through them all... but there is just a litany of abuse of power that must be stopped. It's obvious what our... what we need to do today. I presume we are all going to vote 'yes' today and

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

I don't think that's a sad thing. I want you to know, as I stand here in front of you, that this is my proudest moment as a Legislator. I believe that we're finally doing what we should have done a long time ago. I think it's imperative and this is something that we can be proud of. We're doing the right thing. I know it's hard; I know it's unprecedented. I know it's unchartered territory, but I can't think of a more important thing that any of us has done in this Body. I encourage everyone to vote 'aye'."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Miller."

Miller: "Thank you, Mr... thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for Chairman Currie that... or Mr. Durkin... Representative Durkin can either answer. A lot of the comments I've received from my community and from around was, why now, question number 1. But number 2, Representative Lang had talked about our duty here as a Body to address the abuse of powers issues. And how does that reflect in the criminal issues that Mr. Blagojevich is facing now? Does that have a bearing on this?"

Currie: "Well, I would say that the criminal complaint certainly sparked the flame that led to the creation of the committee. But the other abuses that are so well documented in the committee's report: abuses having to do with flu vaccines and expansions of programs without legislative authority. I think those have been with us for some time and I think taken together the items that are detailed in the criminal complaint and the clear abuses and excesses of the Governor with respect to the constitutional

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

authority invested in him, I think the totality of all of that reaches the level of impeachable."

Miller: "Simply stated, a lot of constituents have talked to me saying, well, he hasn't been convicted of anything."

Currie: "And... and..."

Miller: "He hasn't, you know, he's faired due process under our United States Constitution. Haven't we circumvented it? Why are we doing this now? He hasn't been found guilty of anything?"

Currie: "We are not a criminal jury. Nothing in our Constitution nor any State or Federal Constitution suggests that our standards should be a criminal one. We don't need to find the Governor guilty of a crime in order to find that he is not fit to govern the people of the state. And I would urge that the material in the criminal complaint, even if he is not found guilty in Federal Court, I would submit the unrefuted testimony that he spent a lot of time figuring out how to sell state actions and state money for his political and personal benefit. Taken together with the excesses of authority that we have seen with these other items, I think the totality of that evidence means that he is not, in fact, fit to govern and he should be removed from office."

Miller: "Thank you, Leader Currie. It was points that was made out in the committee yesterday regarding that each of the incidents may not be considered within themselves an impeachable offense, but however, collectively or as I like to say this has been a slow train wreck moving that has all sort of accumulated to our actions that will be today."

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

Currie: "And that's exactly the way to think about it and certainly the way the members of the committee thought about it. One transgression may not be enough to send somebody from an office that they won through a fair and open democratic election, but if you add to one transgression, if you have many, many more and I think this report... this report, if you read it, you will find that it is filled with evidence of many transgressions. Some of them may end up with a criminal verdict of guilty, some may not, but all of them are examples of the misuse and abuse of power by this Governor."

Miller: "Thank you, Chairman Currie. To the matter at hand today..."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Miller... Mr. Miller. Mr. Durkin."

Miller: "I'm sorry."

Durkin: "Representative Miller, I think you just asked a few questions. I just wanted to follow up with it. And your question is, why now? If anybody follows the Federal Court and criminal process, if we did not take action until the Governor is given his day in Federal Court, it could be possibly two (2) to three (3) years. He could fill out his term. He could make further appointments. He could sign laws. He can still have the... all the rights and authority that he has under our state statute and State Constitution. Now, the issue regarding impeachment is a legislative... strictly a legislative process. And we can talk a little bit about due process; I brought that issue up earlier. We're not required by our Constitution; that is what we're bound by, to afford due process to the Governor. But I

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

would suggest that what we afforded the Governor in that committee was not only due process, it was due process plus. And remember, we did look at the evidence; we weighed it carefully. One of the things that we put great attention to was the affidavit in the criminal complaint. We just didn't take that and just say, all right, this is enough. We brought in a former United States attorney who was in the organized crime strike force who was very involved and spent a career working with wiretaps 'cause Mr. Genson went to great length stating that this is... to challenge the integrity of that document and he laid a foundation for that committee to establish the types of hurdles and hoops that the Federal Government must go through to have the authorization for the wiretaps. And the fact is not only in the affidavit is it signed and sworn by the federal agent, but it was also signed off by a federal judge. And the wiretaps themselves, both of them, were authorized by a federal judge, so we believe that on weight that that was significant. We're not a criminal Body; we're not trying the Governor. The Senate will have the trial; they'll establish what the rules are, but the fact is we did afford the Governor and his attorney due process. If they choose not to avail themselves to it, that's their decision, but we can use that against him in our deliberations. But the fact is why now? Because I think we have to right now. We represent thirteen million (13,000,000) people and if we did not act, we would be derelict in our duties. So, I'm glad we're moving... we're

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

moving expeditiously, but also remind you, we have been thorough and we have been fair."

Miller: "Thank you, Representative Durkin."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Miller. Mr. Miller, you're recognized, Sir."

Miller: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Durkin, thank you. Leader... Chairman Cross, thank you. Excuse me, Currie, thank you. Looking at the report and I would all... all the citizens of the State of Illinois to read it, I agree with this report in the findings. I'm a Member of JCAR in which the expansion of health care was proposed by the administration which we blocked time and time again. So, I understand what it's saying. This is a classic example to me that the end doesn't justify the means. When I first was elected, I was elected to respect the process and go through the process. And as a private citizen and a practicing dentist before this, I was used to doing things instantly and my way, but unfortunately I can't have it that way in here because I've got to lobby Members on both sides of the aisles, in both chambers to hopefully agree upon things that I feel that is value to my community and the State of Illinois. We need all our constitutional officers to do that and especially our Governor. I was elected not to deal with an impeachment, but to deal with the state and the needs of the State of Illinois, to deal with children's education, to deal with economic opportunities, to deal with trying to make a fair playing field for all of those for the desire in their hearts and for us to strengthen those communities and those

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

individuals that need help, not do deal with this. It is a shame that we have to, but I was also sworn as a constitutional... a State Representative to deal with this and to support the actions of what is in front of us and to vote to impeach the Governor. We should look at this document, we should study it, but today we should vote to support the impeachment."

Speaker Madigan: "Representative Monique Davis."

Davis, M.: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I really don't have a great political speech to make today, but I want to remind the Body of how when our Governor comes down the aisle how we fall all over each other, some push us out of the way, in an attempt to get to the Governor, to shake his hand, to get a hug, just to be so proud that the Governor is gracing this Body with a speech or just coming over to talk to us. That is... that has been our relationship with our Governor. What has brought us to where we are today? First of all, we heard a lot of rumors, we read a lot of newspaper articles and I'm not going to say we turned our head, but each of us had little bits of different information. At one point in the latter part of December, the Federal Government after obtaining a wiretap knocked on the Governor's door, brought him out of his home, put handcuffs on him and placed him in an official Federal Bureau of Investigation car. He bonded himself out, that, of course, made each one of us realize that we have to act. The national press continued to claim that the entire State of Illinois is corrupt. You and I both know that is far, far from the truth. In this Body, 113 people voted to

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

establish an impeachment committee. An impeachment committee whose duty was to investigate those rumors, to investigate those newspaper articles, to investigate those complaints from other citizens, and investigate we did. We listened to testimony from witnesses, we read documents brought into us that we requested from our Chairmen Currie and Durkin. We asked Mr. Ellis if we could have certain pieces of information. Those things that were criminal that will affect the criminal case were denied us, but we found we didn't even need them. What kind of behavior did our Governor exhibit? What actions did he take that brought us to this point? The most egregious one was ignoring the Constitution that states that the Legislative Body is the appropriating Body. We appropriate the funds from the State of Illinois. The Governor can have a bright idea, but if it doesn't come through this Body, it is not legitimate. I believe some of the expenses that he has incurred upon this state did not make it better for the citizens. They weren't intended to make it better for the citizens. If you look at page 57 of this document, that is extremely well-written, if you look at the sec... the first total paragraph on that page, it says the committee has heard a great deal of evidence relating to various instances... instances where the Governor's inappropriate action constitutes an abuse of power. The Governor's counsel in response has provided the committee only a very small amount of information that doesn't even address most of what our proceedings were about. When we look at the former Governors of the State of Illinois, when we look at

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

the abuse of power that this Governor has exhibited, our citizens are not better off. They absolutely are not better off. We looked... this committee looked at the pattern of behavior, the pattern of behavior that violates the essence of a Legislative Body, there were some people that we heard from who were themselves personally harmed. There were many things brought up in our committee that are not even a part of this report. If the Governor walks down that aisle today, how many of you... how many of us would fall over ourselves to greet him. I think we'd hold our head down in shame. We wanted him, we elected him, we supported him, and he's disgraced us. Our role at this point is to support this Resolution. Let the Senate try him and may the state move forward on the behalf of all citizens. And I thank you for this opportunity."

Speaker Madigan: "Representative Gordon."

Gordon: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ladies and Gentlemen, I stand in support of House Resolution 1671. Today, in this great democratic Body of the Illinois Legislature, we discussed the Articles of impeachment before us. As a former prosecutor, and I shouldn't say former prosecutor 'cause many of you know I have a prosecutor's heart 'til the end, I am well-versed in innocent until proven guilty, and in a court of public law, Governor Rod Blagojevich must and will be granted his constitutional day in court and will be seen innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. However, the court of law and the court of public trust are two very different things. Today, as we stand in the House of Representatives, the peoples' House, we are in the court of

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

public trust. Trust is sacred to elected officials and the Governor has broken that sacred trust, once broken it can rarely be restored. And while the Governor will attempt to repair his image, he will not and must not do it on state time when matters of life and death are at stake before this Legislative Body. The people of Illinois deserve better. We have many pressing issues before us: funding our schools, making our schools competitive in a global market, health care for children, cracking down on crime, giving law enforcement the tools they need to keep us safe, and attracting entertaining quality jobs in Illinois. We must do all of this and more in very, very trying economic times. We need to keep Illinois business friendly and at the same time produce a balanced budget. The laundry list of things that we need to do to accomplish in the 96th General Assembly is extensive and we will not be successful with the circus environment of a federal prosecution and trial and with a chief executive who refuses to live in the real world. Every decision this Governor makes will be second guessed and tainted with pay-to-play politics that Illinois is sadly all too familiar with. Once again, the people of Illinois deserve better. While the Governor has not been convicted of breaking any law yet, it is clear ethical lines have been crossed. And when the Governor first ran, he promised, promised, as my good friend Representative Susana Mendoza has said, promised an open and transparent government and to be a reformer. Sadly, we have all been disappointed and the people of Illinois deserve so much better. In the last few weeks, we have

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

witnessed the dark days of... for Illinois government and with the possibility of impeachment, this cloud of darkness will continue to blanket over the Illinois government. While the respectable and the right option for Governor Blagojevich is to step aside, clearly the Governor has absolutely no respect for the office of the Governor let alone any respect for the business that needs to get done for the Illinois people. Ironically, the last time he ran, his slogan was 'getting things done for people'. His real things... his real slogan should have been 'getting things done for himself'. I would venture to say he doesn't even know the people of Illinois. His attorney made very clear at a press conference that the Governor would resign when the people of Illinois would begin to suffer. Governor, I ask you today, would you like to meet the people personally who are suffering or would affidavits suffice? Our duty as elected Representatives of the people of Illinois is to voice their will. Every single one of us speak for over a hundred thousand (100,000) people around this wonderful state. Today, I plan to voice the thousand... I plan to be the voice and continue to be the voice for the thousands of people who have given me the privilege of being the State Representative of the 75th District. They have written, they have called, and they have spoken to me about how disgusting this chapter in Illinois history has all been. We deserve better they say and it is time for the Legislature to act in this time of need. We must vote to send this Article of impeachment to the Senate so we can move on. Our time is being wasted on the shortcomings of

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

one man. It is sad that we must even have this vote, but we must vote and finally deal with the issues that really matter to the people and families of the great State of Illinois. And finally, Ladies and Gentlemen, I want to talk to you about our Constitution. I've sworn to uphold the United States Constitution and the Illinois Constitution many, many times. The first time I did it was in 1998 when I received my law license here in the State of Illinois and when they asked me to uphold the Illinois Constitution and the U.S. Constitution, I meant it. I meant every word of it. And because those two documents, the Illinois Constitution and the U.S. Constitution, I meant it because those documents are to be revered and respected every single day, without them we would not have our outline for government and we wouldn't be able to do the things that we do here every single day. I meant it each and every time I was sworn into a public office whether it was at the county level or the state level and I meant it on December 17 of 2003 when I became the State Representative of the 75th District. I meant it when I stood in the upstairs courtroom of the Grundy County courthouse and Judge Robert Marsalia gave me the oath of office to be the State Representative. Judge Marsalia was the very first judge that I ever appeared in front of first as the Illinois Supreme Court rule 711 clerk and then as an attorney in the State of Illinois. I tell you this because I mean every word of that oath every time that I've taken it. And I tell you this because the people of Illinois are listening to us today and I want them to know that all of

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

my colleagues who stand in this room with me today also mean it when they take that oath to uphold the Illinois Constitution and the United States Constitution. Sadly, the Governor of the State of Illinois never meant a word when he said that he would uphold the Illinois Constitution and he would uphold the United States Constitution, but he is not the rule, he is the exception. And today, my colleagues in the House, we need to tell the people of the State of Illinois, we need to tell the people of this nation and the people all around the world who are listening that the people who'll represent the true people of the State of Illinois are in this House are in the Legislature and we mean it when we take the oath of office. We mean it when we say we will uphold the Illinois Constitution and we will uphold the United States Constitution and when we vote 'yes' on this Resolution today, that's exactly what we are doing. Thank you, Ladies and Gentlemen."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Acevedo."

Acevedo: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House. On December 15, 2008, history was in the making. A special investigative committee from the Illinois House of Representatives was formed to investigate the serious allegations against the Governor Rod Blagojevich and to see if there was enough evidence to support the Articles of impeachment. One of the more serious allegations being he tried to sell the Senate seat of President-elect Obama. While we took no pride and joy in the task that lay ahead, we felt it necessary to first and foremost to bring back

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

the integrity... the integrity and trust of State Government and it must be restored. It must be restored. We entered, even though the Governor's attorney, Genson, had publicly stated that we were on a witch hunt and we already knew what we were going to do. Ladies and Gentlemen, I can assure you that we entered the deliberations with open and impartial minds. After all, this is still the United States of America where you're innocent 'til proven guilty. But after objectively evaluating all the evidence that was presented before the committee and listening to weeks of testimony concerning this controversy, we have come to the conclusion, a disturbing conclusion that the Governor's conduct in this matter has been in violation of his oath of office. For weeks now, Members of the Special Investigative Committee have been hearing testimony from witnesses and reviewing material evidence released by the U.S. Attorney's Office concerning allegations that the Governor attempted to sell his appointment to President-elect Barack Obama's vacated Senate seat amongst other things. While we still are waiting the court's decision to release secretly recorded conversations on the prob of pay-to-play activities within the Blagojevich administration, we can't wait any longer. We must act now. The people of the State of Illinois deserve much better from their elected officials. Citizens should be able to trust their elected officials and based on the evidence, it is clear to me that he has acted in the manner inconsistent with the Illinois Constitution and beyond his lawful scope as Governor. Moreover, his conduct in this matter continues

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

to be a deterrent to the important work of all of us in State Government. We need to do the work of the people of the State of Illinois. The Governor has lost the trust, he has lost the trust of both the general public and his colleagues in government. He is simply unable to govern as a Governor should. It is our responsibility as elected officials and to the people of the great State of Illinois to put this awful chapter behind us. We must move forward with agenda and the work of the people of Illinois. So, for this reason, Ladies and Gentlemen, I urge you to join me and cast your vote 'yes' for calling the article of impeachment against the Governor Rod Blagojevich. Thank you."

Speaker Madigan: "Representative Hamos."

Hamos: "Thank you. I do have to say that when I look up at that board and see the words 'impeachment of Governor' it takes my breath away. From the beginning of this process, I have been concerned about the precedent that we are setting. As a young child, I escaped from a totalitarian country and am sensitive to how government power is used. I know firsthand that power can be used for worthy goals or it can be misused or abused for evil purposes. I have worried that in the future our actions could lead to impeachment of another Governor in the future year, perhaps a good Governor, through a Legislature's power of impeachment. The impeachment power of the Legislature should be used only in the rarest of instances and for the most egregious of acts. We have not had an impeachment in Illinois for a hundred seventy-six (176) years and I hope

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

sincerely that we will not need to have another impeachment process for another a hundred seventy-six (176) years. That's why I have been uncomfortable from the beginning about the vagueness in the Illinois Constitution cause for impeachment. That is the only standard set for us. And this morning one of our colleagues said that that standard should be determined by whatever 118 people... peoples' own consciences dictate. I wrote to eleven thousand (11,000) people on my e-mail list and discussed this challenge that what should be the appropriate standard of cause for impeachment and I received hundreds of replies from people with thoughts or analyses and many expressed the notion that the vagueness in the Illinois Constitution is actually its strength. But in the future our words and actions today will be analyzed and dissected. We are creating an important... an incredibly important historical precedent. Many of my colleagues this morning have already reviewed the specific instances that led to this impeachment process, the Governor's actions over a number of years both criminal and noncriminal and I'm not going to repeat those. To me the process that our committee undertook was the key. Day-long hearings, a multitude of witnesses, due process granted to the Governor as we have discussed and culminating in a 59-page, thoughtful report filled with solid documentation demonstrating a pattern of abuse of power. This is not just 118 people's own ideas, but solid evidence chronicling a totality of circumstances demonstrating the betrayal of public trust by our Governor

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

and justifying the cause for impeachment. And I urge an 'aye' vote."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Riley."

Riley: "Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My statement is essentially to the young people of the State of Illinois. In these intervening weeks, I've spoken to my constituents. I've spoken to a lot of people from schools, principals and counselors, who have asked me, what is it that we can say to our students? What is it that we can say to our young people about what's happened? Many of them are afraid, scared. Being a child of the '60s when JFK was assassinated, I was in seventh grade and I thought about how we felt. We were terrified. We didn't know what... you know, what was going to happen. And somehow I remember that the next day the mail came out, the sun came out, things progressed because we have systems in place. And I would just essentially tell all the young people of the State of Illinois that though we are sad in doing what we are compelled to do, it's a great day for the State of Illinois. Why is it great? Because it proves that the system works. It proves that the system works and no matter who you are: a kindergarten student, someone in high school, someone who has the public trust, if you violate that trust, if you do the wrong things, you will be found out and you will be punished for it. Simply said, but the sun will still come up tomorrow. And we have systems in place to be sure that each person, each resident of the State of Illinois will be taken care of. And so, essentially, that's what I would tell all the people... all

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

the young people of this state that we're there for you, the system works, and that the things that we do here are lofty endeavors that you should consider. I also, you know, was in college during Watergate and I remember a statement that was made, I think it was John Dean... John Dean, if you didn't make it, you know, then I'm wrong... but somebody made it. And it said something like, young man stay away from Washington. I would tell all the young people aspire to be public servants in your communities, in your schools, you know, clubs, aspire to serve. It is a very, very lofty position to be in. And so, essentially, that is what I would say to all the young people of this state. There is hope and this is a great day for the State of Illinois. Thank you."

Speaker Madigan: "Mr. Saviano. All right. Ladies and Gentlemen, there is no one else seeking recognition. The last speaker to close will be Representative Currie. Let me make two announcements. Number 1, we shall return here on Monday, January 12 at 1 p.m. and as you leave, the Doorkeeper will have the IDOT weather reports for you as you leave the chamber. Representative Currie to close."

Currie: "Thank you, Speaker and Members of the House. First I have to express my appreciation to Representative Durkin, the Minority spokesman on this committee, who could not have been more cooperative, more helpful. Second, I want to express my appreciation to every Member of the committee and to our bevy of permanent substitutes who over the holidays were willing to come here and do very hard, very difficult and very time-consuming work and everybody did it

STATE OF ILLINOIS
95th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TRANSCRIPTION DEBATE

300th Legislative Day

1/9/2009

with the real recognition of the gravity of our responsibility. And third, of course, the staffs were phenomenal: ours led by David Ellis, yours by Matt O'Shea. The staff was here day in and day out, put a crimp in their holiday plans just as this experience did to our own. But I'm proud of the committee; I'm proud of the deliberative approach that we took and I'm grateful to each and every one of you. My heart is heavy but my responsibility is clear. The evidence we gathered... the evidence we gathered makes it clear that this Governor tramples on the legislative prerogative; he breaks State and Federal Laws. In his own words, he expresses a willingness to barter state official acts and state taxpayer money for personal and political gain. This Governor has violated his oath of office. This Governor has breached the public trust. This Governor must be impeached. And I urge your 'aye' vote."

Speaker Madigan: "The question is, 'Shall the House adopt House Resolution 1671?' Those in favor signify by voting 'yes'; those opposed by voting 'no'. Have all voted who wish? Have all voted who wish? The Clerk shall take the record. On this question, there are 114 people voting 'yes', 1 person voting 'no'. The House does adopt House Resolution 1671 and Governor Blagojevich is hereby impeached. Representative Currie moves that the House stand adjourned until Monday, January 12 at 1 p.m. Those in favor say 'aye'; those opposed say 'no'. The 'ayes' have it. The House stands adjourned until Monday, January 12 at 1 p.m., providing perfunctory time for the Clerk."