

August 28, 2009

To the Honorable Members of the Illinois Senate,
96th General Assembly:

I hereby return Senate Bill 2090 with a specific recommendation for change.

For several decades, the Compensation Review Board has been a controversial body. This legislation abolishes the Compensation Review Board. I commend the General Assembly for enacting this significant reform measure. I am proud that we have taken this step.

Eliminating the Compensation Review Board will enhance transparency by shining light on the levels of compensation of our political officials. My administration takes great pride in taking tangible steps to make state government more transparent as part of an overall effort aimed at restoring the faith of the public in our democratic institutions following an unprecedented crisis of integrity.

I recommend modifying one aspect of this bill. Section 35 prohibits officials from receiving a cost of living adjustment in fiscal year 2010. Given our current fiscal situation, that is an appropriate decision. I applaud the General Assembly for taking this difficult step. I propose that we go even further: eliminate the automatic cost of living adjustment for every year going forward.

Finally, one important provision of this bill is now moot. Section 35 of this bill includes a provision requiring each member of the General Assembly to forfeit four days of compensation at a rate of 1/365th of the member's annual salary. However, Senate Bill 1912, which I approved on July 15, 2009, repeals this provision and replaces it with a requirement that each member of the General Assembly forfeit 12 days of compensation at the greater rate of 1/261 of the member's annual salary. This increase reflects the standard that I have set for myself, my staff, and other employees of the Executive branch. I applaud the members of the General Assembly for taking the honorable step of sharing in the financial sacrifice we all must endure during times of economic distress.

Therefore, pursuant to Article IV, Section 9(e) of the Illinois Constitution of 1970, I hereby return Senate Bill 2090, entitled "AN ACT concerning government.", with the following specific recommendation for change:

on page 22, by replacing lines 12 through 14 with "beginning July 1, 2009 or any fiscal year thereafter.".

With this change, Senate Bill 2090 will have my approval. I respectfully request your concurrence.

Sincerely,

PAT QUINN
Governor