

July 22, 2016

To the Honorable Members of
The Illinois Senate,
99th General Assembly:

Today I return Senate Bill 2931, one of several bills backed by the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Healthcare Illinois & Indiana that would impose unaffordable obligations on the State's taxpayers.

The bill mandates an immediate increase from \$13 to \$15 in the hourly wages for personal assistants who perform in-home care for individuals with disabilities pursuant to the Home Services Program operated by the Illinois Department of Human Services. That is an immediate pay increase of over 15 percent. The bill also mandates a level of contributions to the union health care plan that covers these workers and requires comprehensive in-person orientation and training, for which these workers would have to be paid the mandated, higher hourly rate. Taken together, these changes would saddle the State's taxpayers with almost \$87 million in additional annual costs. This bill does not provide for a funding source for that \$87 million. This is money that the State does not have and would have to offset through cuts to this and other programs.

Further, the individuals covered in this legislation already earn more than their counterparts, both here in Illinois and in other states. The average hourly wage for personal care assistants in the United States is \$10.60. In Illinois, outside the Home Services Program, these workers likewise earn \$10.60 per hour on average. Pursuant to collective bargaining agreements with the State, workers represented by SEIU already earn the hourly rate of \$13, with more skilled workers earning much more. The State simply cannot afford to increase the hourly rate from \$13 to \$15. When the rest of State government is being asked to do more with less, it would be irresponsible to give one special group a 15 percent pay hike.

in the parties' prior collective bargaining agreement, SEIU negotiated and secured the right to provide its own orientation and training to personal assistants. For SEIU now to insist on a mandatory orientation and additional annual training on taxpayers' dime is troubling enough. It is doubly so when the bill would require that the workers receive a higher hourly wage for all of that time, and on an annual basis.

Therefore, pursuant to Section 9(b) of Article IV of the Illinois Constitution of 1970, I hereby return Senate Bill 2931 entitled "AN ACT concerning State government", with the foregoing objections, vetoed in its entirety.

Sincerely,

Bruce Rauner
GOVERNOR