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From: Richard Goldberg, Deputy Chief of Staff for Legislative Affairs
To: Members of the General Assembly
Date: November 10, 2015
Re: HB 4305: Another Opportunity for Compromise

While we continue to urge legislative leaders to enact a complete balanced budget rather than taking a piece-meal approach, Governor Rauner is comfortable with HB 4305 proceeding as an effort to build on the compromises announced yesterday regarding Unemployment Insurance, Child Care Assistance Program and DON Score. In addition, to further strengthen the progress made over the last few days, legislators can – and should - fund the public safety and critical services currently excluded from HB 4305, including salt for snow-covered roads, funds for veterans in state-run homes and debt service payments that would ensure Illinois avoids a debt default. While adding these line items will not help balance the budget, doing so will ensure important services paid for by “Other State Funds” are funded while negotiations continue on how to reform state government and balance our “General Revenue Fund” budget.

Excludes Critical Areas of Public Safety

HB 4305 excludes several critical public safety line items in Other State Funds, including Animal Disease Testing (Illinois Department of Agriculture Laboratory Services Revolving Fund 024), Public Health Laboratories (Public Health Laboratory Services Revolving Fund 340), and Testing, Screening and Treatment of Metabolic Diseases (Metabolic Screening and Treatment Fund 920). Just as we approach the snowy winter months, the bill excludes salt purchases, fuel purchases and vehicle maintenance payments for the Illinois State Police and Illinois Department of Transportation (Traffic and Criminal Conviction Surcharge Fund 0879 and Road Fund 0011). Additionally, the bill excludes funding for critical State Police and Department of Corrections operations (State Police Operations Assistance Fund 0817 and Department of Corrections Reimbursement and Education Fund 0523).

Excludes Veterans Homes and Debt Obligations

Funding for the veterans’ homes in Quincy, Manteno, LaSalle and Anna comes from OSF. But HB 4305 excludes funding for these homes (Quincy Veterans Home Fund 0619, Manteno

Veterans Home Fund 0980, LaSalle Veterans Home Fund 0272 and Anna Veterans Home Fund 0273). HB 4305 also excludes an appropriation to pay the debt obligation on the state's Civic Center bonds (Illinois Civic Center Bond Retirement and Interest Fund 0105). The rating agencies all have highlighted the need to appropriate payments on the Civic Center bonds. Failure to make payment on this debt by December 15th will lead to the first Illinois state debt default since 1842. Notably, House and Senate Democrats recently appropriated funds to pay the debt on McPier – a payment nearly identical to the Civic Center debt obligation.

Embrace Compromise, Protect Public Safety

Yesterday, compromises were reached on a range of issues, including Child Care, the DON Score and Unemployment Insurance. We are hopeful that “Other State Funds” for public safety and the public interest can also be a place for compromise. Keeping our roads safe in snowy weather, keeping our veterans fed and keeping our debt obligations paid – we can all agree these should be bipartisan priorities.