

Reclaim Illinois Candidate Questionnaire

Reclaim Illinois is a grass roots organization aimed at educating, advising and encouraging citizens to take informed action to reclaim our state from the culture of corruption which poisons our government. Gathering valuable information in order to further inform voters is key as the primary election quickly approaches.

After finding inadequate detail on candidate web sites Reclaim Illinois has designed this questionnaire to bring further clarity to light regarding candidate stances and proposals on foundational subjects. Citizens deserve additional details into how such massive problems as state government corruption are going to be effectively addressed as well as how honor, integrity, justice and a sense of pride will be returned to Illinois through the efforts of possible leaders such as yourself.

Please honor the citizens of this state by filling out this questionnaire briefly and yet completely and e-mailing it to (ReclaimIllinois@yahoo.com) by **COB 1/15/2010**

Candidate Name: Bill Brady

Candidate's Web site: www.bradyforillinois.com

Q?

Do you believe there is a culture of corruption within Illinois state government i.e. statewide elected office holders, the legislature and state employee ranks? Y/N, please provide details,

A:

Yes. Last year Illinois witnessed an historic new low, the impeachment of a Governor who faces trial this year on federal charges of using his office for his own personal gains. We in Illinois are both embarrassed and angered that Illinois has become a national laughingstock in terms of public service. Our citizens are demanding more of their public officials, and we certainly owe them every effort we can make to regain their trust and restore integrity in Illinois government.

I don't believe Illinois' reputation will truly be restored until we elect a Governor with a clean break from the Chicago-style politics of the past. I am that candidate.

Q?

How do you think that those hired during the Blagojevich administration should be dealt with given the expanse of corruption during his administration? Provide details regarding what action you will take.

A:

I support the so-called "fumigation" bill to terminate state employees directly hired by the governor over the last ten years, particularly those hired directly by Blagojevich.

Q?

Do you think those hired and/or retained in leadership during the Quinn administration should be removed given the lack of change and even the adoption of questionable Blagojevich projects that were allowed to continue? Example: During 2009 IBM TSP contractors were allowed to continue at inappropriately high hourly rates on web related projects within CMS/BCCS despite the fact that the Quinn administration was alerted several months earlier.

A:

Yes. Illinois needs a clean break from the Chicago-style politics of the past. As the only Downstate candidate not tied to politicians and policies of the past, I offer that change. I will run a transparent and trustworthy government, ending the culture of greed and corruption that has stained Illinois' integrity and image.

Q?

Do you think those hired during the Ryan administration should be considered questionable as well?

A:

Yes. I will terminate any state employee hired directly by Governor Ryan.

Q?

Governor Quinn was in a unique position to make meaningful reforms within the sphere of his own authority as governor in early 2009 which would have improved Illinois state government dramatically but chose to squander the "Golden" opportunity. Over and above dealing with Blagojevich and Quinn hires what are your specific proposals, actionable by your administration within your elected authority, to diminish the culture of corruption?

A:

To curb corruption and the incentive for pay-to-play politics, I support capping individual campaign contributions at the federal level of \$2,400 for a primary and \$2,400 for the general election cycle. Those limits would be real and meaningful reform, meaning that no individual could contribute more than \$4,800 to the election or re-election of any statewide official.

The days of full-time legislators, full-time fundraising and career politicians in state government should be days of the past.. We need to ensure that it is the public's interests that are being served in Springfield, not the politicians' interests..

I am also calling for term limits that would return Illinois to the citizen legislature envisioned by the writers of our Constitution and diminish the ability of legislators to serve for decades in powerful legislative leadership positions. I would limit legislators to five terms in the House and three terms in the Senate, stopping the current practice of concentrating power within the hands of a few. In addition, I believe term limits can result in greater participation by rank-and-file legislators and create greater interest in running for public office.

I support a redistricting plan conducted by an independent, nonpartisan body that uses a computer program to draw the boundaries, recognizing county, township and city boundaries to the greatest extent possible, to eliminate legislative gerrymandering, and gives all Illinoisans greater representation in the legislature through three-member House districts. Three representatives would be elected from each of 41 Senate districts, trimming the size of the legislature to 164 members from the current 177.

I also support recall of the Governor, as the voters will have a chance to decide in November 2010. I was the co-sponsor of legislation that would give the citizens of Illinois the right to recall public officials, including statewide officials, legislators, judges and local officials, who violate the public trust.

And, as I mentioned, I support the "fumigation" bill to terminate state employees hired directly by the governor over the last ten years.

Q?

What will you do to root out inept and or ineffective management?

A:

I will take the same approach as I have with my business. I will be clear about what my expectations are, and if they don't perform, they can find another job.

Q?

In some cases those involved in questionable activities early in the Blagojevich administration continue on the state payroll to this day having had little or no punishment. What will you do to uncover past inappropriate, questionable or even criminal activities and bring about justice including firings, prosecution and restitution?

A:

I have sponsored legislation that gives greater protection and incentive for whistleblowers to come forward and report wrongdoing without having to worry about retaliation.

Q?

State employees can conceivably play a key role as watchdogs within state government. What will you do to alleviate the fears that state employees have regarding coming forward to expose corruption, bullying and generally questionable treatment and/or activities?

A:

I have sponsored anti-corruption legislation, including a law that prevents companies or individuals with state contracts from making campaign contributions and, as I mentioned, legislation that gives greater protection and incentive for whistleblowers.

Just last week (January 12, 2010), I made public information I received from front-line Department of Corrections workers who were concerned Governor Quinn's practice of reclassifying prisoners to address overcrowding in Illinois was putting them in grave danger. How did Governor Quinn and his Director of Corrections respond? They issued a gag order on all prison employees, threatening if they talk to the media they could lose their job.

I've called on Governor Quinn to lift that gag order, because I believe no one can uncover wrongdoing like a state employee who is working in the trenches, witnessing the misconduct first hand each day. When I am Governor, I will encourage state employees to act as watchdogs to expose corruption or questionable activities in state government.

Q?

What will you do to improve state employee morale and instill a sense of pride?

A:

I will return Illinois to a state of fiscal responsibility, giving employees a sense of pride and purpose.

Q?

What will you do about the questionable state employees that have been moved around and squirreled away and or have been able to achieve further protection for themselves by joining unions?

A:

All employees will be held to the same standard, and be held accountable. If they don't do their job, they won't have a job.

Q?

What will you do to address possible reverse discrimination activities and issues that have taken place in recent years?

A:

I will abide by and enforce the laws of Illinois.

Q?

Do you support term limits for statewide offices? Y/N, why?

A:

Yes, I support term limits that would return Illinois to the citizen legislature envisioned by the writers of our Constitution and diminish the ability of legislators to serve for decades in powerful legislative leadership positions.. Statewide officials would be limited to three terms in any one office.

Q?

Do you support term limits for legislators? Y/N, why?

A:

Yes. As I mentioned, I would limit legislators to five terms in the House and three terms in the Senate. Legislators who are term-limited out of office could seek to return after being out of office for six years. Fifteen other states impose term limits on legislative service.

Q?

Do you support all state FOIA requests and accompanying results being provided online? Y/N why?

A:

Yes. I believe in open, transparent government. FOIA requests are designed to hold governments accountable to the people they serve and ensure that Illinois residents have greater access to their government, and I support that.

As one example, I recently sponsored transparency legislation in the Senate calling for immediate internet disclosure of all unpaid bills as received. I believe Illinois residents have a right to know what the state is spending, who the state owes money to and how much. Also, that preferential treatment is not given to the order in which bills are paid. I plan to put this legislation into effect when I am elected Governor.

Q?

Do you support a constitutional amendment designed to reform the Illinois legislature known as the PutBack Amendment? Y/N, why?

A:

You can see from my reform package that I support, in theory, many of the reforms incorporated in the Bambenek Put-Back Amendment though my proposals differ in details. I especially

support returning to multi-member districts to ensure minority party representation in each district. I do have concerns, however, about losing the check-and-balance aspect by eliminating a bicameral General Assembly and abolishing the amendatory veto. Despite the misuse of that power by Rod Blagojevich and frankly some other governors since 1970 to completely rewrite legislation, the amendatory veto has some merit in that it can – and should only – be used to correct technical flaws in legislation, negating the need to send faultily drafted bills through the costly process of re-passage by the General Assembly.

Q?

In November citizens will vote on a constitutional amendment to allow the recall of a governor by citizen initiative. Do you support this amendment? Should all public officials be subject to recall?

A.

Yes, as previously indicated, I support the recall of a governor by citizens initiative. I also believe Illinois voters should have the right to recall public officials, including statewide officials, legislators, judges and local officials, who violate the public trust.

Q?

Do you favor or oppose limits on campaign contributions by individuals and interest groups? Should limits apply to contributions made by political parties and by funds controlled by the leaders of the House and Senate? Explain.

A.

As outlined in my government reform package, I support imposing the federal restrictions on individual campaign contributions to Illinois legislative and statewide candidates. Individual contributions should not exceed \$4,800 per election cycle including the primary and general election contests. And yes, limits should apply to contributions made by political parties and by funds controlled by the leaders of the House and Senate.

Q?

Should legislative redistricting be conducted by an independent, nonpolitical organization or should the power to draw legislative boundaries stay with the legislature? If you support a change, detail your suggestions toward an accomplishable new method.

A.

The main Constitutional requirements for legislative districts are that they be compact and contiguous. Congressional districts need be only contiguous. There can be only one explanation, for example, why the city of Springfield is split among three Congressional districts, one of which stretches from the Quad Cities down the Mississippi River and eventually snaking around to include a part of the capital city and Decatur. That explanation is incumbency protection and political advantage.

I support amending the state Constitution to give the task of redistricting every 10 years to an independent body, such as the State Board of Elections, which has a membership evenly split between the two major parties. I believe a computer should draw legislative districts. We need to eliminate politicians controlling their own destiny and drawing districts that fit their interests, rather than the people's interests they represent.

I also believe the boundaries of legislative and Congressional districts should be coterminous with the boundaries of existing cities, townships and counties to the extent possible, allowing for court-approved population deviations.

I also support returning to multi-member House districts with no more than two being from the same political party and slightly reducing the size of the Illinois General Assembly. Three representatives would be elected from each of 41 Senate districts, trimming the size of the legislature to 164 members from the current 177. Multi-member districts would both give partisan representation to every citizen of Illinois and also serve to limit the powers of the Speaker of the House.

Q?

Lawmakers recently approved revisions in the Illinois Open Meetings Act. Do you believe those changes are adequate? If not, what other changes should be made?

A:

It appears to me that those changes will improve transparency and accountability at all levels of government through training and enforceability. I support immediate transparency in open meetings, as long as it does not affect or compromise contractual or legal negotiations.

Q?

Illinois is struggling with a multi-billion dollar budget deficit. What are your top targets for spending cuts? Can the state balance its budget without a tax increase? Y/N, why?

A:

There's not one area of state government budgeting that cannot be deconstructed and reconstructed to save money. I believe Illinois needs to prioritize its programs and cut state spending by approximately 10 percent, saving \$5.5 billion on the \$55 billion base budget. State government must do more with less, just as families across Illinois are doing today.

Three of the biggest priorities for savings are Medicaid, the State Board of Education, and the Department of Corrections.

Illinois needs a better managed Medicaid system that gives recipients access earlier in their illness, so patients can see their doctors instead of high-cost emergency room visits. This will save the state approximately \$1.2 billion to \$1.8 billion and improve access to health care for Medicaid patients.

Furthermore, I would eliminate the State Board of Education as a means to cut bureaucratic spending and provide more money directly to the classrooms. I will restructure our educational bureaucracy by creating a streamlined, efficient and smaller department directly accountable to the state's chief executive and thereby the people of Illinois. I will create better coordination between our 49 community college districts and our regional offices of education to more effectively assist our local school districts.

We also need to eliminate the high-paid Department of Corrections appointees under the Blagojevich/Quinn administration, focusing more dollars on front-line correctional workers. Furthermore, we need to improve the management of our corrections system by eliminating the expensive mandatory overtime system of the current administration.

I have called for tax cuts of \$1 billion to make Illinois a more business-competitive state, including rolling back the \$300 million in business tax and fee increases imposed by the Blagojevich/Quinn administration, eliminating the sales tax on gasoline and the ending the estate tax penalty in Illinois.

If we follow the plan I have outlined and truly tighten state government's belt, as every Illinois family and business has had to do, I believe we can erase the deficit and begin to build an

operating surplus that can be used to begin paying our outstanding obligations down.

I believe the long-term solution to the state's fiscal imbalance is bringing back the 700,000 jobs Illinois has lost in recent years, which would ultimately result in a \$3 billion annual infusion of tax revenues to the state treasury. In the short term, I will order a top-to-bottom prioritization of state spending to curtail programs that are outdated or underperforming and reconstruct government from the bottom up.

Q?

At what rates would you raise or lower income taxes for individuals and/or corporations?

A:

I do not support any tax increases.. One of the few positive tax policies for businesses considering making an investment in Illinois is the flat income tax. Illinois cannot afford to increase taxes in any area. We need to live within our means, reducing the tax burden on the people and businesses of Illinois and encouraging business investment and a growing economy in our state.

Q?

Do you support Zero-Based Budgeting Y/N, why? If yes, when and where will you implement it?

A:

Yes, I will implement Zero-Based Budgeting in every area of state government. In the private sector, we have to justify every dollar we spend and where we spend it. State government should be no different.

Q?

Would you consider raising other taxes and/or fees to raise money? Explain.

A.

No. Generally, Illinois taxes and fees are already over burdensome and hinder business investment in Illinois. I will work to reduce the cost on Illinois families, business and business investment. This means, holding the current rate or reducing it. I will not support, nor will I sign, any net increase or expansion of the state income tax and state sales tax or support the creation of a service tax.. To do so would invite more inefficiencies and over-spending and, just as importantly, drive our tax-paying businesses and their jobs to other states, as the tax and fee increases imposed by the previous administration have done. I will work with the General Assembly to repeal those taxes and fees to once again make Illinois friendly to economic expansion. If we are to attract business investment and jobs in Illinois, we need to reduce the cost of doing business and the cost of living in our state.

Of all the candidates for Governor, Republican or Democrat, I am the only one who has voted solidly and consistently against raising taxes, and I will continue to do so.

I am also calling for tax cuts. As I mentioned, I will cut \$1 billion, including rolling back the \$300 million in business tax and fee increases imposed by the Blagojevich/Quinn administration, eliminate the sales tax on gasoline and the end the estate tax penalty in Illinois.

Q?

Health care for state employees and retirees costs Illinois billions a year. What do you propose to reduce the state's costs?

A:

All active employees should receive an equal state contribution for their health care. Currently, the state spends more money per employee not in managed care than for those who are. Employees and retirees should have a choice between managed care and a more traditional PPO but pay the difference in cost. Currently, the state's cost for those in a PPO is tens of millions of dollars more in aggregated costs than those in managed care, and the aggregate has been estimated at approximately \$200 million. If employees choose the more expensive PPO, they should have to pay 100 percent of the difference for the higher premium of the PPO. Future employees should pay 100 percent of their cost on retirement and be subject to Medicare, just as most retirees in the private sector. Current employees and retirees percentage of employers' subsidy should be negotiated and/or managed based on similar private sector opportunities within balanced budget restraints.

Q?**Illinois has an unfunded pension liability. Please briefly identify the root causes and what you propose in order to remedy the situation.**

A:

In order to stop the bleeding in what is a very serious pension funding problem, I believe we must move from the current defined benefit pension program for state employees to to a defined contribution system for new state employees, similar to that we offer state university employees under legislation I sponsored and similar to 401(k) options being considered and implemented by other states and private industry.

I believe such a system will begin to correct the growing unfunded liability problem. It is actuarially sound and provides guarantees and benefits for the state taxpayers, state employees and their families.

The existing pension liability of \$65 million to \$70 billion would be refinanced through commercial paper, bonds and banks, amortized over 50 years with the payments increasing an average of 4 percent or at a rate equal to the percentage of the increase of state government revenues.

Q?**Should the state expand or reduce eligibility for Medicaid? What are your proposals to make the state's Medicaid system more frugal?**

A:

I have sponsored efforts to bring a managed care approach to health care for the state's Medicaid population, a move that would increase access to health care in the system while saving an estimated \$12 to \$1.8 billion annually. The state cannot afford to expand Medicaid at this time and needs to enforce current eligibility requirements so that fraud is eliminated. I also support maximizing the implementation of medical savings accounts as a means to allow people to be more involved in their health care decisions.

Thank You!!