

NTUI NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL TAXPAYERS UNITED OF ILLINOIS

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NTUI AND GOVERNMENT SCHOOL TEACHER DENOUNCE TAXPAYER-FUNDED RALLIES FOR 67 PERCENT INCOME TAX INCREASE

National Taxpayers United of Illinois President **Jim Tobin** denounced Illinois and Chicago teacher unions' use of taxpayer funds for political lobbying. Tomorrow, May 18, teachers' unions, administrators and their allies will rally in Springfield to urge the state legislature to pass a 67 percent state personal income tax increase. The Springfield rally for higher taxes, coupled with Monday's rally in Chicago, culminate a months-long effort on the part of the Illinois public school lobby to increase Illinois taxes.

HB 755, Amendment #2, would raise the state corporate income tax \$602 million, from 7.3 to 10.5 percent, making the Illinois corporate income tax the second highest in the nation, second only to Iowa. HB 755 also would hike the state personal income tax 67 percent, \$5 billion. HB 755 is sponsored by Senator Richard Winkel Jr. (R-52 Urbana) and Senator Kimberly Lightford (D-4 Westchester).

Billed as a "tax swap," HB 755, merely holds out the possibility of partial property tax rebates while preserving intact the power of school districts to levy property taxes as before. Said Tobin, "There will be no long-run guarantee that property taxes will be reduced at all, and HB 755, says nothing about controlling spending. The only certainty is that the overall income tax burden on Illinois taxpayers will be increased by almost \$6 billion per year."

On four previous occasions this legislative session, the Illinois Education Association and the Chicago Teachers Union sponsored special "Lobby Days." Hundreds of teachers took days off work to head to Springfield to lobby for more money and other benefits for themselves. Substitute teachers were brought in at district expense to replace the missing teachers, and in many cases, the missed workdays were counted as "professional days" and also paid by taxpayers.

"It is really quite a scam when you have highly-paid union teachers neglecting their responsibilities in the classroom to lobby for even more money for themselves, and doing it at taxpayer expense," said **Jerry Kohn**, a teacher at H. L. Richards High School in Oak Lawn. "I stress to my students how important it is for them to be in school each day, but that cannot be too convincing when some of their teachers are missing in action so they can conduct union lobbying. Lobbying on behalf of one's self-interest is not what I would consider 'professional development,'" added Kohn.

Founded in 1976, NTUI is the largest taxpayer organization in Illinois with over 10,000 members and affiliation with more than 200 local taxpayer groups.

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