

How has the Illinois Policy Institute attacked state employees?

- **The Illinois Policy Institute issued a skewed “study” to prove state workers earn too much.** In 2015 and again in 2016, the IPI published “Right-sizing Illinois state government’s payrolls,” propaganda arguing that Illinois state workers were overpaid that the IPI presented as legitimate research. The study failed to compare similar job titles across state workforces, failed to account for differences in public and private sector employment, and did not consider the fact that Illinois has among the fewest, if not the fewest, state employees per capita in the nation. ([Illinois Policy Institute, 2/3/15](#); [February 2016](#))
- **The Illinois Policy Institute recommended reducing state workers’ wages by up to 34 percent depending on sector.** In 2016 the Illinois Policy Institute recommended drastically lowering state workers’ pay.
- **The Illinois Policy Institute: “The only sure way to prevent the disparity from growing is for the governor to insist on an immediate across-the-board pay freeze for three years” for state employees.** The IPI held that “reducing wages and salaries would also provide a significant down payment toward achieving the important goal of putting the Illinois pension system on a more sustainable path.” ([Illinois Policy Institute, February 2016](#))
- **Illinois Policy Institute lobbied against HB 580, the arbitration bill AFSCME proposed in order to prevent a strike.** Executive Vice President of the conservative think tank, Kristina Rasmussen, said the group was working to fight HB 580, which would have put the state contract before an arbitrator. ([Herald & Review, 5/11/16](#))
- **The Illinois Policy Institute advocates that state workers pay more in health care costs.** In a post on their website, IPI made the following arguments: “Overall, active state-government employees are paying approximately 17 percent of the total cost of health-insurance coverage for themselves and their dependents. That is a smaller share of the total than what a private-sector worker in Illinois might pay...Three changes must be made: First, state-government employees should shoulder a larger share of their health-insurance coverage costs. Those costs should be tied to the actual health-care coverage costs, not salary.

Second, health-insurance plans for state-government workers should be brought closer in line with the coverage that average Illinoisans have access to, and the amount they pay for that coverage.

Third, workers should have an expanded range of plan choices, portability of coverage and an ability to establish employee-owned health savings accounts.” (Illinois Policy Institute, 2/11/2015)

- **IPI wrote Illinois should increase state retirees’ health care costs to 54 percent.** “Among other things, any health insurance reform should, at a minimum, increase the amount government retirees in Illinois pay for health insurance to the national average – 54 percent. ([Illinois Policy Institute, 7/14/2014](#))
 - **IPI wrote that the state should eliminate retiree health care for new workers.** “Among other things, any health insurance reform should, at a minimum, increase the amount government retirees in Illinois pay for health insurance to the national average – 54 percent. Going forward, the state should eliminate this benefit for new workers.” ([Illinois Policy Institute, 7/14/2014](#))
- **The Illinois Policy Institute advocates reducing state employees’ pensions, saying: “The main cause of Illinois’ budget woes is not a lack of revenue, but rather unsustainable spending – particularly on government-worker pension costs.”** The IPI argued that “the Illinois Supreme Court can and should change its interpretation of the pension protection clause to allow reforms of unearned benefits of current workers. And if the court refuses to budge, Illinoisans’ next step should be to demand the end of the pension protection clause through a constitutional amendment.” ([Illinois Policy Institute, 9/1/2016; 9/1/2016](#))
- **An Illinois Policy Institute staffer wrote that Governor Rauner should “lay off the entire state workforce and close the pension system,” because “a government shutdown might be exactly what Illinois needs.”** Diana Sroka Rickert wrote, “here is what Gov. Bruce Rauner should do: Lay off the entire state workforce, and close the pension system. Work with the General Assembly to open a different retirement plan for newly hired government workers, modeled after the nation's most popular retirement vehicle: the 401(k). Then offer to rehire state workers under the new retirement plan.” ([Chicago Tribune, 9/13/16](#))
- **The Illinois Policy Institute supports the privatization of government services.** The IPI argued that Sandy Springs, Georgia: “can serve as an example of efficiency for Illinois and the rest of the country.

Sandy Springs, incorporated in 2005, has about 100,000 residents, which is about the size of Springfield, Ill., and more than twice as large as Moline, Ill. But unlike those cities – and cities across Illinois – Sandy Springs does not have any long-term liabilities, and yet is still able to provide services, invest in its infrastructure, and keep taxes flat. That is because Sandy Springs relies on private contractors for services government workers typically provide. Besides its police and fire departments, the city only has eight full-time employees. The city’s communications team works for a public affairs company. An engineering firm maintains the city’s parks. Judges are paid a flat, hourly rate.” ([Illinois Policy Institute, 8/19/2016](#))

- **The Illinois Policy Institute criticized state employees’ union contract for providing for paid holidays and a fair disciplinary process.** Just after Labor Day, the IPI published a critique of the state contract negotiations that was rife with misinformation and mischaracterizations.
- **Bruce Rauner gave \$625,000 to the Illinois Policy Institute and hired three former IPI employees to his administration.** The State Journal Register reported that the Rauner Family Foundation had contributed a total of \$625,000 to the IPI since 2009. The contributions were mentioned while explaining that the Illinois Policy Institute was denied press credentials by the appellate court and denied an appeal of that decision by the Supreme Court. The appellate court decision stated, “The IPI is plainly an advocacy organization, and even though it did not register as a lobbyist in 2014, both the House and Senate determined it should have.” ([The State Journal-Register, 2/11/2015](#); [10/7/2016](#))
- **Illinois Policy Institute: “The expiration of the current state-government labor contract provides opportunities to find real savings for the next fiscal year.”** The IPI stated “Right-sizing Illinois government payrolls along these lines [by reducing workers’ pay] could save up to \$1 billion a year.” ([Illinois Policy Institute, February 2016](#))
- **IPI attacks Upward Mobility Program.** “Thus far in fiscal year 2015 Illinois has spent more than \$586,000 from the state’s General Funds for “employee tuition and fees. These are payments made direct to educational institutions or to reimburse employees for tuition and related educational fees for employment-related courses and studies. Requiring employees to pay their own tuition and fees could save \$1.1 million in fiscal year 2015, with larger savings next year.” ([Illinois Policy Institute, 02/03/15](#))