

Selling the JRTC: generating millions for Chicago Public Schools

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CHICAGO - Governor Bruce Rauner announced today that Senate Minority Leader Christine Radogno (R-Lemont) and House Minority Leader Jim Durkin (R- Western Springs) have filed legislation that will direct all future property tax receipts from the redevelopment of the James R. Thompson Center (JRTC) to Chicago Public Schools. The bill numbers are SB2209 and HB4044.

"The JRTC is sucking up valuable space, time, and money," Governor Rauner said. "No one likes working here. It's expensive to maintain and it's a drain on taxpayer resources.

The legislation introduced today gives us yet another reason to move swiftly in selling this building. Every day of delay just postpones Chicago's ability to earn millions in property taxes."

The JRTC currently occupies an entire city block in Chicago's Loop and presents a unique redevelopment opportunity for the city. By selling the building, Illinois taxpayers could earn hundreds of millions in a sale and Chicago could generate up to \$45 million annually in property taxes. Under Leaders Radogno and Durkin's legislation, CPS could see an additional \$1 billion in dedicated revenue by 2040.

"Selling the JRTC and directing all of the future property tax proceeds to the Chicago Public Schools would benefit both Illinois and Chicago taxpayers," Leader Durkin said. "The legislation would provide CPS with a stable source of additional revenue for years to come, and would let Illinois off the hook for hundreds of millions of dollars in repairs and maintenance costs on a dilapidated building we can no longer afford."

"This is a win-win, which will provide savings for the taxpayers of Illinois while at the same time providing a much needed economic boost to the City of Chicago," Leader Radogno said.

In order to get the best deal for taxpayers, the General Assembly needs to pass legislation to sell the building. Additionally, Central Management Services (CMS), which manages the JRTC, has been working cooperatively with the City of Chicago and other stakeholders to position taxpayers to get the largest return on investment.

"The JRTC has always been costly to operate, and when combined with the millions in needed repairs, it's worth less than it would cost to fix," Acting CMS Director Mike Hoffman said. "We have pledged to be a partner with Chicago to ensure state and city taxpayers get what they deserve."

CMS estimates deferred maintenance on the building is more than \$326 million. Among the repairs needed are: the HVAC system, the fire and sprinkler system, and the elevator system.

"This sale has been talked about for way too long. It's time to get something done," Governor Rauner added. "With the cooperation and partnership of city and state leaders, we can make this a reality."

Video of the press conference can be found [here](#).