

# Statements On Gov. Pritzker's State Of The State Address

February 3 2022 9:08 AM



## **State Representative Adam Niemerg (R-Dieterich):**

*“In a not-so-subtle campaign ploy, Governor Pritzker is dangling property tax, gas tax and grocery tax relief for working families. While it is nice to see the Governor finally admit that lower taxes benefit working people, the truth is his actions are disingenuous. The money for his one-time tax relief benefits comes from federal funds propping up the Illinois budget despite his protests to the contrary.*

*What is needed is permanent, structural reforms to get our budget under control. The financial mess facing our state is a direct result of the gamesmanship we see all too often. Instead of addressing the long-term financial health of our state, we use one-time sources of revenues to play games and do nothing to improve the financial health of the state.*

*Once again, the Governor is proposing a budget with record breaking spending. If the Governor really wanted to help working families in Illinois, he would find ways to reduce spending and couple those reductions with meaningful, permanent tax relief.*

*Governor Pritzker seems to be living in an alternative universe. People concerned about the future of the state are in no way trying to suggest Illinois is a bad place to live. Illinois is a great state but unfortunately leaders like JB Pritzker are failing this great state miserably. Illinois has the third highest outmigration rate in the nation not because people are tired of deep-dish pizza but because of the failure of leaders like JB Pritzker who won't even acknowledge what simple math and simple statistics plainly show.*

*So much for science.*

*Statistics don't lie but politicians do. Not only is Gov. Pritzker lying to us, he also is lying to himself. The Governor may try to paint a rosy picture of our state but the thousands and thousands of people leaving our state tell a much different story. People are leaving Illinois in droves to escape Pritzker's incompetence and poor leadership. Period.*

*Finally, the Governor failed to give Illinois residents any assurances that his COVID-19 mandates on schools would be lifted any time soon. It is time for our state to return normal. Governor Pritzker's new normal is an Orwellian nightmare that must come to an end once and for all.*

*Instead, all we are going to get is more of the same. More mandates. More spending. More residents leaving our state. Illinois citizens deserve better."*

## **IL Primary Health Care Association:**

*Today, we joined Illinoisans across the state to listen to Governor Pritzker's joint state of the state and budget address. We applaud the Governor and his Administration for endeavoring to prioritize equity, strengthen investment in the safety net, and fortify the healthcare workforce while stabilizing our state fiscally.*

*In spite of the difficult, uncertain circumstances that we continue to navigate, over the past year, Illinois has emerged as a leader in the health care space. We launched health care transformation projects, piloting innovative, community-based regional partnerships to strengthen investment in historically underserved areas. We became the first state in the country to expand postpartum Medicaid coverage from 60 days to a full year – an important step toward eliminating maternal mortality disparities. And we expanded health coverage to low-income immigrants ages 55-64, building on a pioneering program which established coverage for undocumented seniors ages 65 and*

*up. These are significant steps forward in the pursuit of health equity and we are excited to build on this momentum as the legislative session and budget development process begin to take shape.*

*Despite the progress we have made, many of the challenges that have long plagued our communities, such as the fragility of funding for safety net programs and health care workforce shortages, have only worsened as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. As our nation reckons with racial injustices, both past and present, the urgent need to strengthen diversity in our health care workforce while also addressing severe workforce shortages in medically underserved areas is clear. We appreciate the Governor's commitment and proposed multi-prong approach for restoring and growing Illinois' health care workforce. The Pipeline for the Advancement of Health Care Workforce (PATH) and increases to nurse student loan repayment are aligned with the Equity and Representation in Health Care Act, which IPHCA is championing with Cook County Health. IPHCA looks forward to working with the Governor's Administration and lawmakers on efforts to improve providers' ability to recruit, retain, and develop health care workers.*

*Additionally, to ensure that community health centers are equipped to continue caring for their communities, we invite policymakers to join us in prioritizing protections for the 340B prescription drug discount program. The 340B program has recently come under threat at the state and federal level. HB4595/SB3729 aims to safeguard this vital program which is essential to health centers' ability to continue to provide affordable medication and access to high-quality, comprehensive care.*

*"Community health centers are foundational to Illinois' public health infrastructure and have been instrumental in the fight against COVID-19. We are heartened by the Governor's vision for improving Illinois' fiscal position so that we are poised to make the investment necessary to strengthen our health care system and bolster underserved communities," said Ollie Idowu, President + CEO of IPHCA. "On behalf of our member health centers, we thank Governor Pritzker, Illinois Department of Public Health Director Dr. Ngozi Ezike, Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services Director Theresa Eagleson, and other leaders within the Administration for their partnership throughout the public health emergency; and we welcome the opportunity to continue working together in support of keeping Illinoisans safe and healthy."*

### **Illinois Fuel and Retail Association CEO, Josh Sharp:**

*"Governor Pritzker's proposal is to temporarily freeze the Consumer Price Index gas tax increase scheduled for July 1, 2022, which would take Illinois's gas tax from 39.2 cents per gallon to 41.4 cents per gallon, a 6.9 percent increase.*

*Illinois already has the second highest gasoline taxes in the country and Governor Pritzker's proposal today does nothing to change that. The Governor is correct that something needs to be done to address Illinois sky-high gas taxes, but more permanent solutions are needed.*

*Eliminating the automatic gas tax increase altogether would be one suggestion, as would reducing or removing Illinois' sales tax on motor fuel. Illinois' sales tax on motor fuel alone is expected to cost drivers' almost \$700 million in FY 2022 and that is in addition to the \$2.3 billion in taxes collected from the state's motor fuel tax. Illinois is one of only seven states that allows compounding sales taxes – from both state and local governments – to be added on top of the state's motor fuel tax.*

*We agree with the Governor on the need for tax relief at the pump, but more is needed than the temporary fix being offered.”*

### **Democratic Party of Illinois Chair Rep. Robin Kelly:**

*“Make no mistake about it: Democrats have delivered remarkable progress in stabilizing our state's finances. Gov. JB Pritzker, along with Comptroller Susana Mendoza, Treasurer Mike Frerichs, and Democrats in the General Assembly, has delivered balanced budgets, credit upgrades, and a dramatic strengthening of Illinois' finances.*

*“As President Biden has said, ‘Show me your budget, and I'll tell you what you value.’ The governor's address shows what Democrats in this state value: investing in our education system, bolstering early childhood programs, fixing our infrastructure, expanding healthcare and human services for all, promoting public safety and violence prevention, strengthening our retirement systems, and delivering real relief for families struggling during the pandemic.*

*“While there is certainly more to be worked out as the General Assembly tackles the FY23 budget, today represents another huge step forward for Illinois as Democrats deliver real progress for the people of this state while bolstering our finances not only for the next year, but for the long term.*

*“After years of catastrophic financial mismanagement under former Gov. Bruce Rauner, Illinois' financial future finally looks bright. While Republicans seem content to advance a slate of candidates who want to drag us backwards, we simply cannot go back to the Rauner days of budget impasses, massive bill backlogs, and governmental chaos. The Democratic Party of Illinois stands ready to support Democratic campaigns up and down the ticket this year to ensure we continue to build on the substantial progress Democrats have delivered to the people of this state.”*

