

A Few Minutes with the Boss

By: Joe Andalina

Illinois is broke

At least that's what you keep hearing, right? Municipalities, too. The state has no money. Can't pay its bills. They had to push legislation through, dismantling an Illinois constitutional mandated law providing pensions for their state workers, teachers, etc. They couldn't afford to pay into their pensions. And now with such legislation, they will be spending millions to defend this unnecessary legislation and we hope will most likely lose.

The funny thing on the way to the forum is that they have the money to litigate. Can't pay their bills but they find the dough to fight their employees—who, by the way, are the folks that make the state run.

Now we hear that the Illinois House Executive committee just voted to fund President Obama's library in Illinois. How much was pledged during this House committee, one might ask? Only \$100 million worth of Mr. Washingtons.

It passed originally without any Republican support 9-0 due to a parliamentary maneuver that recorded four Republican members as yes who were not in attendance. They had a second vote after Republicans complained and the bill passed 7-4.

Enthusiasm abounded by lobbyists and House Speaker Michael Madigan who pushed the bill, making it clear that this project was a personal one. Madigan did agree that funding this new project set a new precedent since they usually raise these funds from private sources.

So with all the cuts to various other projects, the state of Illinois feels they can fund \$100 million to a library. Nice, huh?

But some politicians don't see this happening. I would bet on the fact that Republicans in the House will block this project. It is wrong on many levels and to use taxpayers' money for this and not workers' pensions appears to this tired old dinosaur a proverbial slap in the face.

We will keep you posted.

Vita é Bella.