

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with: Larry L. Bomke  
Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library  
*Pension Crisis in Illinois* Oral History project

Interview # ISC-A-L-2016-006

Larry L. Bomke, former Senator for the State of Illinois representing central Illinois, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Illinois Statecraft – Pension Crisis in Illinois* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location: Mr. Bomke's office, Dimond Brothers Insurance, Springfield, Illinois.

Date: Tuesday, February 9, 2016; 9:00 a.m.

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: John Perkins, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: \_\_\_\_\_

Edited by: \_\_\_\_\_

Transcript  
being processed

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Time: 0:49 / 0.82 hrs.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on March 2, 2016.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

© 2016 Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library

## Abstract

Larry L. Bomke, *Pension Crisis in Illinois*, ISC-A-L-2016-006

**Biographical Information Overview of Interview:** Larry Bomke is the former Republican Senator of the fiftieth (50th) Senatorial District of the State of Illinois, serving in that position from 1995 to January of 2013. He was born in Springfield, Illinois in June, 1950 and grew up on a farm in the Springfield area. Prior to his appointment to the Illinois State Senate when Karen Hasara was elected as mayor of Springfield, Bomke had served nineteen and a half years on the Sangamon County Board. He attended high school in Springfield and graduated from Lincoln Land Community College. Professionally, Mr. Bomke is a partner in a Springfield area insurance company and lived in Springfield at the time of this interview. His wife is a retired school teacher and they have two children.

This interview highlights Senator Bomke's experience in the Illinois Senate when state employee pensions became a highly controversial issue. The evolution of the state pension crisis is discussed, with Bomke relating his, the legislatures' and past Governors' roles in repeated attempts to reform Illinois's pension system. He addresses how the Illinois General Assembly has increasingly been dominated by Democrats, and the impact that election cycles have had on discussions about pension reform. He discusses the effects of a law passed during the Edgar administration requiring the state to pay an ever increasing amount to the pension system (pension ramp), and of the law passed during the Blagojevich administration authorizing pension holidays. Bomke shares his thoughts about existing system conditions contributing to the problem, potential solutions and discusses his views on recent changes designed to address funding concerns.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** Sangamon County Board; redistricting; under funding history; caucuses, committees and bills; Governor Edgar's pension ramp; book value vs. market value of pensions; recession; law for pension holidays in 2005/2006; Pat Quinn's temporary income tax increase; pension bonding; Tier 1 vs. Tier 2 employees in pension system; Cost of Living Allowances (COLAs); defined benefits/defined contributions, Senate Bill 1 of 2013

**Note to the Reader:** Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

## COPYRIGHT

**The following material can be used for educational and other non-commercial purposes without the written permission of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. "Fair use" criteria of Section 107 of the Copyright Act of 1976 must be followed. These materials are not to be deposited in other repositories, nor used for resale or commercial purposes without the authorization from the Audio-Visual Curator at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, 112 N. 6th Street, Springfield, Illinois 62701. Telephone (217) 785-7955**