

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Jim Banovetz

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library  
*Illinois Statecraft - Pension Crisis* Oral History project

Interview # ISC-A-L-2016-028

Jim Banovetz, Professor and Director Emeritus of Northern Illinois University's graduate program in public administration and staffer at the Illinois Constitutional Convention of 1970, 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:

Date: May 25, 2016    Location: Telephonic interview from Abraham Lincoln  
Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

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

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

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_    Total Time: 1:24 / 1.4 hrs.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on May 8, 2019.

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

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Interview being  
processed

## Jim Banovetz, Illinois Statecraft, ISC-A-L-2016-028

**Biographical Information Overview of Interview:** Jim Banovetz spent his career researching and conducting training on the subject of local governmental operations. Jim was born in Forsyth, Montana in January, 1937. His family moved to Minnesota where Jim graduated from Duluth High School in 1955. He graduated from the University of Minnesota, Duluth in the field of social studies in 1959, and continued his education at the University of Minnesota, earning an MA in public administration in 1961 and his PhD in 1963. That same year Jim arrived at Northern Illinois, where he spent much of his professional career. Jim taught in the Graduate Program of Public Administration, then left in 1966 for Loyola University (Chicago) where he was an Associate Professor, Director for the Center for Research in Urban Government, and Director of the Graduate Program in Urban studies. In 1969, he also worked as a staffer at the Illinois State Constitutional Convention. Banovetz returned to NIU in 1969 and held a variety of positions, including Director for the Center for Governmental Studies, Chairman of the Department of Political Science, Director of the Division of Public Administration, and Senior Research Fellow for the Center of Governmental Studies. Banovetz was a founder of the University's graduate program in Public Administration and the Center for Governmental Studies. He also served as the editor for the Center's *Policy Profiles*. He also served as a visiting professor at the University of Ife in Nigeria in 1979, as well as the University of Illinois in 1985 and at Cleveland State in 1991-93. He is a noted expert on public administration, public policy and ethics, and municipal government. Along the way, he has authored nine books on local government, including *Managing the Modern City* and *managing Small cities and counties*.

Banovetz discusses the 1970 Illinois State Constitution through the eyes of a staffer. Specifically, he addressed the training of delegates, the home rule question (testifying before the Local Government Committee), and how the pension amendment came about and why it did not include funding requirements. Jim also reviewed some of the challenges on funding public sector pensions, including public sector unions, collective bargaining, the role of the courts, the tendency to expanding benefits during an election season, lack of actuarial accounting, lower investment income, raids on the pension funds, and a number of early retirement plans. Also discussed were efforts to deal with the rising pension liability as well as Illinois different political cultures, politics between the various geographical regions and the culture of clout.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** 1969 Illinois State Constitutional Convention (ConCon); Local Government Committee at ConCon; Home Rule and Illinois State Constitution; Illinois State Constitution pension clause; local government operations; political culture of Illinois; unfunded liability of Illinois public pension system;

**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.

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