

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Dan Montgomery

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

Interview # ISC-A-L-2015-060

Dan Montgomery, President of the Illinois Federation of Teachers, 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: Nov. 30, 2015 Location: Robert M. Healey Bldg., Westmont, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL Volunteer

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Transcript
being processed

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 1:53 / 1.88 hrs.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on January 27, 2016.

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

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Abstract

Dan Montgomery, *Illinois Statecraft*, ISC-A-L-2015-060

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Daniel Montgomery was born in Detroit, Michigan in May, 1963. He grew up in the Detroit area, graduating from Andover High School in 1981, and earned a BA in English from the University of Michigan in 1985. Dan's first job was at the City Colleges of Chicago-Harry S. Truman, working with English as a second language (ESL) students, and also earned a Masters of Education degree from Northwestern University in 1993. Montgomery then received a teaching position at the Niles North High School, where he taught English, Advanced Placement, & American Studies courses for eighteen years. Dan became active in the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT), and for ten years served as the head of the 1,800 member North Suburban Teachers Union. As a result, Dan was a Vice-President on the IFT Executive Board from 2002 to 2010. In 2010, he was elected IFT President and was reelected in 2013. In addition, at the time of the interview he served as the vice president of the American Federation of Teachers (AFL-CIO), VP of the Illinois AFL-CIO and served on the Board of Directors of the Albert Shanker Institute, the Center for Tax and Budget Accountability, and Chicago's Theater Oobleck. He served for seven years as a director of the National Board for Professional Standards and is trustee of the Lincoln Academy of Illinois.

This interview explores the problems facing Illinois's state pension funding and his involvement as a TRS member and union president. He asserts that the current pension crisis is due to a lack of state funding, and offers possible solutions, including a progressive income tax, an expanded sales tax, and a restoration of the temporary income tax increase passed during the Governor Pat Quinn administration. Montgomery addresses Gov. Edgar's 1995 pension reform, the impact of COLAs on pension funds, the pension bond sales, various early retirement plans, and pension holidays. The Tier 2 Act was reviewed, Senate Bill 1 in 2013, and the selection of a firm to challenge the constitutionality of SB 1 in the courts. Montgomery discusses this case in detail, including venue issues, plaintiff selection, legal arguments, and expedited hearings. He also explored the concept of pension cost shifting, contract law and consideration, and the 6% salary increase cap (from previous years) on pension payments. He also discusses 'We Are One Illinois,' a labor coalition working to protect public sector employee pensions.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Illinois Federation of Teachers on Illinois pension crisis; legal challenge to Senate Bill 1 of 2013; importance of pensions for retirees; pension cost shifting and the six percent pension cap; We Are One Illinois; COLAs and IL state pension

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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