

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Senator Bill Brady

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Illinois Statecraft - Legislators Oral History project

Interview # ISL-A-L-2021-006

William E. (Bill) Brady, an Illinois State Senator and Senate Minority Leader (Republican) from 2017 to December 2020, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Illinois Statecraft* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Dates: Mar 15, 31, Apr 19, May 14, 25, Jun 4, 24, 29, Jul 23, 30, Aug 13 & 20, 2021

Location: Bill Brady's real estate office in Bloomington, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Mark R. DePue, Director of Oral History, ALPL

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Transcript being
processed

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 1:48 + 1:43 + 1:47 + 1:22 + 1:37(5) + 1:32(6) + 1:29(7) + 1:24(8) + 1:18(9) + 1:25(10) + 1:13 + 1:30(12) / 1.8(1) + 1.72(2) + 1.78(3) + 1.37(4) + 1.62(5) + 1.53(6) + 1.48(7) + 1.4(8) + 1.3(9) + 1.42(10) + 1.22(11) + 1.5(12) = 18.14 hrs.

Session 1: Early life, college years and entry into Illinois politics to 1994

Session 2: Years in the Illinois House Republican Caucus & 2000 run for Congress

Session 3: Years in the Illinois Senate until December 2008 & reflections on Obama

Session 4: Blagojevich impeachment & trial, & the early Gov. Quinn administration

Session 5: Republican candidate for the gubernatorial election of 2010

Session 6: IL Senate experiences from 2011 thru 2014

Session 7: Gubernatorial election of 2014 & early Gov. Rauner administration

Session 8: Illinois budget crisis 2015-2017 and elections of 2016

Session 9: Legislation during the Gov. Rauner administration and election of 2018

Session 10: Gov. Pritzker administration in 2019

Session 11: Pandemic of 2020 and impact on legislature & his real estate business

Session 12: Election of 2020 and Brady's reflections on his legislative career

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on October 20, 2021

The interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

Bill Brady, *Illinois Statecraft - Legislators*, ISL-A-L-2021-006

Biographical Information/Overview of Interview: William E. (Bill) Brady was born on May 15, 1961 in Bloomington, Illinois. He graduated from Bloomington Central Catholic High School in 1979, and from Illinois Wesleyan University, where he was a member of Sigma Chi fraternity, in 1983. He married Nancy True, a native of South Bend, Indiana, in 1982. Following graduation, Brady worked in his father's business, built homes, and in 1985 earned a real estate license, paving the way for the formation of a real estate marketing company with offices in Bloomington, Champaign, Lincoln, and Clinton. By the early 1990s Brady, a Republican, became interested in politics and was elected to the Illinois House of Representatives in 1992, representing the 88th District.

Brady served in the Illinois House until 2000 when he made an unsuccessful bid for the U.S. Congress. In 2002 he ran for the Illinois Senate to replace his political mentor, John Maitland. He won that election and served in the Illinois Senate until his retirement on December 31, 2020. From July 2017 to his retirement Senator Brady was the Senate Minority Leader. In 2006 Senator Brady ran in the Republican primary for Governor, losing to Judy Baar Topinka, who was subsequently defeated by incumbent Governor Rod Blagojevich. Brady ran again in 2010, this time winning a close 193-vote victory in the Republican primary, and then ran a spirited race against Governor Pat Quinn, losing by only 31,834 votes out of the total 3.7 million votes cast. He ran for governor a third time in 2014 to unseat Gov. Quinn but lost in the Republican primary to venture capitalist Bruce Rauner. Rauner went on to defeat Quinn, but for the next two years his administration was unsuccessful in passing a budget through the Illinois legislature controlled by the Democrats in both houses. Brady talks about the efforts to pass a budget, especially what came to be known as the 'grand bargain,' a proposal advanced by Senate President John Cullerton and Senate Minority Leader Christine Radogno. When that effort failed in the spring of 2017, Senator Radogno resigned and Brady became Senate Minority Leader. The budget was eventually passed. Brady's last two years in the Illinois Senate were during the first two years of Democrat Governor J.B. Pritzker's administration.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Illinois state Senate; Gov. Pat Quinn; Senator Christine Radogno; Senator John Cullerton; 2017 grand bargain budget legislation; real estate business; Senator Barack Obama; IL state Senate during COVID-19 pandemic; Illinois gubernatorial

election of 2010; Illinois House Speaker Mike Madigan;

Notes 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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