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Review: How have 'Grand Bargain' bills done?

By Jim Broadway, Publisher, Illinois School News Service

Here are links to the original "Grand Bargain" bills:

- [SB0001 EDUCATION-TECH](#) (Status: Third reading, amendments pending.)
- [SB0002 MINIMUM WAGE-WITHHOLDING](#) (Third reading, amendments pending.)
- [SB0003 LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONSOLIDATION](#) (Amended, **passed 43-14-2**, held in Senate.)
- [SB0004 GO RESTRUCTURING BONDS](#) (Third reading, amendments pending.)
- [SB0005 PEN CD-CTPF-STATE CONTRIBUTION](#) (**Passed 35-22-1**, held in Senate.)
- [SB0006 SFY17 VARIOUS](#) (**Passed 42-16-1**, held in Senate.)
- [SB0007 GAMING-VARIOUS](#) (**Passed 31-26-0**, held in Senate.)
- [SB0008 PROCUREMENT-OMNIBUS](#) (**Passed 41-16-2**, held in Senate.)
- [SB0009 REVENUE-VARIOUS](#) (Third reading, amendments pending.)
- [SB0010 LOCAL GOV-ASSIGN RECEIPTS](#) (After **passing 36-13-10**, motion to reconsider prevails.)
- [SB0011 PEN CD-TIER 1 ELECTION](#) (**Lost 18-29-10**; this bill is dead.)
- [SB0012 WORKERS' COMP-VARIOUS](#) (Third reading, amendments pending.)
- [SB0013 PROP TX-PTELL FREEZE](#) (Third reading, amendments pending.)

Notes on bills' status: All bills are still in the Senate; even those that passed were held in the Senate by motions to "reconsider" the passing vote. (Such a motion may be made only by a member who voted "on the prevailing side." Could SB 11 be revived on that basis? Technically, yes, but it won't be. What about SB 10? With the motion to "reconsider" having prevailed, it is as if that passing vote had not been taken; it remains on third reading.

Each of these bills was originally linked to each of the others. That is, for any one of them to take effect in law, all of them would have to. Now that SB 11 has died, each of the others (including the ones with passing votes) would have to be amended to exclude the linkage to SB 11 in order to become law. Also, an amendment has been filed that would make the bill intended for school funding reform - SB 1 - a stand-alone measure, not linked to any other bill.

The bills that were "held in Senate" were halted, prevented from being delivered to the House, by motions to reconsider the passing vote. The bills cannot be moved until those motions are either withdrawn or voted down. If the motions prevail (as with SB 10) the bills can get another vote, amended or not. If withdrawn, the bills move to the House.

The third-reading deadline for all of the bills that are not declared passed (except SB 11) was extended to May 31. Each of the bills, including those declared passed, could experience further modification in the Senate before going to the House, and of course the House can always amend any bill that it receives.

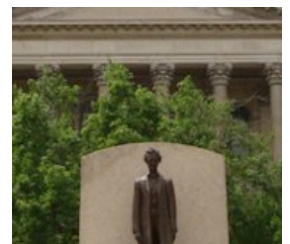
Does all this mean the "Grand Bargain" concept is kaput? Not really. If the governor and the four caucus leaders (yes, it will be bipartisan or not at all) agree on a package of bills that include the necessities - a dramatically increase revenue flow to the state and school funding reform - the recovery could begin.

Some of the Senate bills listed above could be parts of such a package. But each would have to be amended at least to remove any linkage to the unrevivable SB 11. Or entirely different bills could be used; the caucus leaders are sponsors of scores of shell bills, including several germane to (usable for) each part of a package.

Can any of these purposes be met, statutorily, if there is no package? Of course. As noted, the school funding reform bill, SB 1, could be a stand-alone bill; Sen. Andy Manar has filed an amendment. Making local government consolidation easy is clearly popular; SB 3 could be made to stand alone. So could SB 8 - procurement reform.

The point is that the experience of the first 13 Senate bills gives us a hint as to what is possible, what may be probable and what is surely impossible; the only concept in the latter category would be a bill adversely affecting Tier I members of public employee unions. The message from the Supreme Court seems to have gotten through.

It's National Teacher Appreciation Week It was my pleasure to be with IEA Region 5 teachers on Tuesday for their annual awards banquet in Edwardsville. [Rep. John Cavaletto](#) (R-Salem), a veteran educator, teacher, principal and coach, prior to being elected to the House in 1998, was the keynote speaker.



Cavaletto's biographical statement on the legislature's web site is a bit modest. For a fuller view of the man, and to gain an appreciation for his accomplishments in life, [here's a brief item from Wikipedia](#). To have played a role in a program that evolved into the Special Olympics was, well, special, I'd say.

Like most parents, I would hope, I got to know a lot of the teachers who helped guide my three children toward a measure of success in life. But the experience that truly deepened my understanding of the contributions teachers make - and the challenges they face in doing it - came to me as a journalist.

Journalists get to know so many individuals in so many professions that a "persona" of sorts emerges from each line of work. Teachers want to be paid, of course, but they didn't enter the profession with dreams of wealth. Theirs is a caring vocation; in each morning mirror they see someone who will help someone else that day. Nurses and others on the front line of healthcare are like that. Hedge fund managers, my experience tells me, are not.

I started covering education in 1970, as a reporter for the Edwardsville Intelligencer. New reporters often get the schools beat, because it is so neatly structured and the sources are so reliable. Educators don't lie at you much. By the time I got to Springfield (1981), I thought I had a pretty good handle on public education.

So imagine how shocked I was to learn in April of 1983 that the nation's economy was a mess because of a "rising tide of mediocrity" that had infected the public school educators of America to such an extent that it "threatens our very future as a Nation and a people." Who said so? [The government of the United States!](#)

You've heard this from me before. The Reagan Administration's publication of "A Nation At Risk" launched an attack upon teachers and public schools in general that continues to this day. Cavaletto said as much Tuesday night. "We do we mess with teachers? Why don't we just trust them and let them do their job?"

You could tell it was more than just an applause line (although there was great applause); Cavaletto truly feels this way. But to answer his question, I believe the corporate leaders of the U.S. - to whom Reagan was quite responsive - needed a scapegoat to an economy in the ditch, and had long wanted control of the schools anyway.

A Nation At Risk served both purposes. It diverted attention from the corporate policy of "[planned obsolescence](#)" and other causes of our economic woes, and it also began a decades-long process of shaping policy so that schools would be run "like a business" - raw material in one end on a conveyor belt of standardization, perfect "product" out the other end, a placid employee (no more "Union Made" stuff) and an avid consumer.

It will fascinate me that ANAR followed by two years the Nobel Prize given to [Roger Sperry, a neuroscientist](#) who clearly advised policymaker and educators to take into account the fact that childrens' brains vary far more than their fingerprints. One size cannot fit all, he suggested; it fits only one.

Also about this time was the introduction of Howard Gardners' [theory of multiple intelligences](#), which still rings true with educators. Kids don't all learn the same things, in the same ways, at the same pace. They all have strengths, but they are not all identical strengths. Standardization seemed a poorly planned experiment.

Poorly planned or not, our policymakers plowed ahead. Statewide "learning standards" came next, followed by high-stakes testing and, eventually, No Child Left Behind. (Trust the teachers indeed. John, what were you thinking?) Now that alt-right kooks own the government, more experiments will surely come. Choice, anyone?

A song I wrote back in 1983 listed the names of some veteran lobbyists. The song was from the perspective of an elected legislator and the implication was that the lobbyists had helped him get elected and now expected something in return:

We have Oscar Weil and Ken Bruce and Dick Lockhart/John Venardos and Bill and Carol Dart/Jim Fletcher, Jerry Shea and Taylor Pensoneau/Mike Howlett, Bob Gibson and Les Brann/Kathy Dunn, Jim Broadway and Dan Houlihan/All of them waiting to collect what they think I owe.

References to Kathy Dunn and Jim Broadway in the penultimate line are obviously recent insertions into the verse. I forget who got kicked out to make room for them. But the point of bringing this up is the third name on the list - Dick Lockhart. I've written about Dick before - a couple of years ago *on his 90th birthday*.

Dick was a highly respected lobbyist, mainly for non-profit human service organizations, when I arrived in Springfield back in 1981. With a generous spirit, Dick taught me a lot about how things work at the Capitol. He helped me as a journalist, later as a lobbyist, and more recently as a journalist again.

Dick's life story is inspiring, and you can read about it in [House Resolution 369](#), a measure honoring his achievements and wishing him well in his retirement, which begins at the end of this session - his 59th. That reference to WW II? He wasn't just in it, he was captured in the Battle of the Bulge, resided a while in a stalag.

Dick Lockhart personifies the best role that can be played in the policy process.

(Did you recognize any of the other names in the song? Weil lobbied for the IFT; Bruce for the IEA; the Darts, Fletcher, and Shea - multiple clients. My friend Pensoneau - coal. Howlett - I don't know; Gibson - President of the AFL-CIO; Brann - President of the Illinois State Chamber of Commerce. Someday I'll sing it for you.)

The legislators have moved a lot of bills around this week, but I'm not seeing anything dramatic. Friday's the deadline. We'll recap the week in Monday's issue. Meanwhile, *hug a teacher!*

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