



ILLINOIS REFORM COMMISSION

Friday, April 24, 2009

Inspiring Better Government Comments from Website and Other Sources

As of April 16, 2009, the Commission has received 1254 public comments through the website. The Commission has received another 351 comments through fax, phone, and postal mail. Of the 1605 comments, 63% made substantive suggestions for reform in Illinois. The remaining comments were either logistical in nature, duplicate comments, or focused on concerns outside of the Commission's scope. 331 or 28% of the substantive comments touched upon the need to inspire better government.

Many commenters expressed frustration with politicians and the rampant corruption in the state:

"This idea of entitlement and abusing the law for your own means needs to end and it needs to end NOW!!! Illinois is an embarrassment." —Libertyville, 02/15/2009

Commenters expressed aspirational goals for public officials:

"I wish I could see our government officials **show more concern for the community.**" — Unknown, 03/02/2009

"Before any reform strategies are going to be supported, **the public needs to see some form of sacrifice on the part of the state legislature.** Stop the blame game, enact some of your own cutbacks on staff and spending, and make sure the public is aware." —Elk Grove Village, 03/20/2009

"Take away all the necessity for large campaign coffers, give them a decent salary and monitor their expense accounts and **maybe some honest, hardworking, civic minded people will run** instead of the goofs we have now." —Crestwood, 03/25/2009

Commenters also pointed out that the culture of corruption cannot be changed solely through enforcement:

"**You cannot legislate morality and ethics.** It has never worked in the past and will not work in the future." —St. Joseph, 02/26/2009

“I know **you cannot legislate integrity or honesty in government** but establishing rules/laws and open records legislation can make it very difficult for one to get away with unethical behavior.” —Farmersville, 02/16/2009

Others focused on positive ways to effect change:

“The way to effect long-term change is to **motivate & engage the IL electorate**. If we've learned anything from the presidential campaign, it is that building a grass-roots movement can be an incredibly effective way to engage millions.” —Oak Park, 02/16/2009

“I hope it is clear to the executive and legislative branches that if they want culture change it will require **specific disciplined techniques instituted within those branches** much more than words. Culture change can only be obtained through instituting the science and techniques of change by trained professionals in that specific area.” —Bloomington, 03/06/2009

Many commenters focused on cronyism or pay-to-play in state hiring and appointments:

“**We simply MUST end pay to play and appointments** to friends and contributors. All appointments should go through a vetting process that assures that the person being considered is among the best qualified and has not bought his or her appointment.” —Champaign, 02/23/2009

“**Too many jobs in our complex government today are filled with political hacks** that have little knowledge about the fields they are placed, often in positions of leadership. Written reports should be required by members of hiring / promotion boards indicating why someone is offered a position with the reports available to all those who participated in the process.” —Old Mill Creek, 03/12/2009

“**A true civil service system** where only cabinet level secretaries and their first deputies are appointed by the government **would get rid of a lot of corruption** because patronage would be a thing of the past.” —Skokie, 03/23/2009

“I am curious about possible legal remedies to the “political dynasties” that have controlled and/or influenced Illinois politics for decades. **Particularly, enabling third-party candidates a better chance of election thereby diversifying and diminishing the entrenched political machine.**” —Hoffman Estates, 02/18/2009