

# Greising: Illinois Tier 2 Pension Promise Needs To Be Fixed

April 30, 2024



In the debate over how to fix Illinois' worst-in-the-nation pension problem, the people who argue that retirement pay and benefits need to be protected at all costs have always held the high ground.

The law is on their side: Pensions are a contract, the benefits of which "shall not be diminished or impaired," the Illinois Constitution says. Some go a step further. Protecting pensions as promised, they say, is a moral imperative, too.

Gov. J.B. Pritzker has staked out that argument.

But lest we forget: A contract is an agreement between two parties, and both parties are entitled to the rights granted under the terms of their compact.

Read more at [chicagotribune.com](https://www.chicagotribune.com)

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# Greising: ShotSpotter Missteps Could Be Turned to the City's Advantage

April 30, 2024



ShotSpotter is the technology that just won't go away. At least not yet.

Mayor Brandon Johnson intended to allow the city's contract with the gunshot-tracking system to expire last month, but then remembered — whoops — the Democratic National Convention was coming to town. Maybe ShotSpotter wasn't

so bad after all. He renewed the contract through November, paying a premium \$8.6 million price for nine months of additional use.

The flipping and flopping on ShotSpotter, over a period of weeks, was hardly Johnson's finest episode as mayor, to put it mildly. But just as good intentions sometimes go awry, bungled missteps can turn to the city's advantage. Perhaps that could still happen with ShotSpotter.

ShotSpotter is designed to use microphones in city neighborhoods and computer algorithms sourced from strategic response centers to "hear" gunfire in the streets and dispatch police to the scene. Chicago police Superintendent Larry Snelling continues to back it — bravely so, given that his boss campaigned on a promise to kill the contract.

*Read more at [chicagotribune.com](https://www.chicagotribune.com)*

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## **Greising: Gov. J.B. Pritzker's Willingness To Tackle Pension Problem Is a Breakthrough**

April 30, 2024



Perhaps the most lasting and important part of Gov. J.B. Pritzker's financial plan for Illinois was not even included in his budget address last week.

For far too long, Illinois has held a shameful worst-in-the-nation status for protecting retirement income for thousands upon thousands of state workers and retirees. The \$142 billion in pension debt — unfunded liabilities — means the state has only 45% of the resources needed to cover its obligations.

Pritzker does have a plan, and that makes him the first Illinois governor in 30 years to propose a way out of this seemingly insurmountable pension problem. Nationally prominent pension experts I talked to over the last week expressed pleasant dismay that an Illinois governor at long last is taking on a problem that for decades has ravaged state budgets, driven away investment — and damaged Illinois' credit ratings, too.

The idea does not come in a vacuum, it's worth noting. Alternative options are out there, highlighted by one put forward by the Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago a year ago.

*Read more at [chicagotribune.com](https://www.chicagotribune.com)*

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# Greising: Local Officials Keep Proving Why Distrust in Government Is High in the Midwest

April 30, 2024



One my favorite rites of midwinter is when Richard Edelman, chief executive of the Chicago-based global public relations firm that bears his name, returns to town to report on whom we trust and whom we distrust.

Lo and behold, we don't trust government much. Not just here in Illinois — which gives us good cause for distrust seemingly sometimes by the day — but globally



too.

Government is regarded both as the least ethical and the least competent among four major categories. The media is next in line as the least trusted. On the other end of the barometer, business and nongovernmental organizations enjoy substantial respect for ethics and competence.

Coming over the horizon is artificial intelligence, a disruptive technology of great potential that nevertheless is shaking the foundations of trust around the globe. Edelman told a packed room at the Executives' Club of Chicago last week that AI could be at an inflection point.

*Read more at [chicagotribune.com](https://www.chicagotribune.com)*

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# **Greising: Public Disciplinary Hearings Are Crucial to Regaining Trust in Chicago Police**

April 30, 2024



Chicago police disciplinary hearings must be held in public

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# **Greising: Mayor Brandon Johnson Appears To Be Learning As He Goes**

April 30, 2024



Mayor Brandon Johnson has shown a willingness to change gears. But the need for him to do so twice in as many weeks is concerning.

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# **Greising: Mayor Brandon Johnson and Gov. J.B. Pritzker Can Be at Odds — As Long as They Do Their Jobs**

April 30, 2024





Most Chicago mayors are motivated to find ways to work with the governor. It's the straightest line toward getting the resources they need.

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## **Greising: As Ex-Ald. Edward Burke Faces Trial, Chicagoans Are Told Yet Again That It Was 'Just Politics'**

April 30, 2024



Former Chicago Ald. Ed Burke's casual, corrupt contempt toward public duty is a not surprising result of such lax standards for public service.

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# **Greising: Maintaining Chicago Police Accountability in New Contract Will Require a Tricky Legal Maneuver**

April 30, 2024



Chicago police are demanding that cops facing suspensions and outright dismissals, should be able to seek arbitration rather than a public hearing.

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# **Greising: Mayor Brandon Johnson's First Budget Shows That the Realities of the Job Have Sunk In**

April 30, 2024



For his first budget, Mayor Brandon Johnson seeks to preserve the progressive vision longer term while dealing with political and fiscal constraints.