

## CAN GOV. PAT QUINN AVERT LAYOFFS?



Layoffs of a fair size may be coming to the state of Illinois. The good news is that they can be prevented, at least partially. The bad news is that in order for that to happen the politicians in the state are going to have to set aside their differences and work together to approve a plan that will save the jobs. Given our dubious national history in this area in the past, and the less than sterling reputation of politics in the state of Illinois, maybe those workers should get their resumes ready just in case of the worst case scenario? The crux of the conflict is between state Gov. Pat Quinn and the lawmakers. If they can come together and agree on a budget then the workers at seven different state-run facilities will be able to stay in their jobs. If not, then they will be out of work. And, in the grand tradition of political workings, they are doing it all on a tight deadline. The decision needs to be made before the 3rd of December or the facilities on the list will begin to shut down. What kinds of facilities might be closed if no agreement can be reached? As it turns out the cuts slated will be made to some fairly vital community services. Some of the facilities on the chopping block include the Tinley Park Mental Health Center and the Logan Correctional Center and youth prison. Four other, as yet unnamed agencies will lose staff, or be forced to close their doors entirely. Not all of the closures will happen on the 3rd. The prison is slated to begin closing on December 31st, and the process will take several months, should an agreement not be reached. Gov. Pat Quinn's plan would keep these facilities open, but instead could close four developmental centers and two psychiatric hospitals. The state has already laid off workers at the Illinois Department of Agriculture because of budgetary problems. The plan has been titled "reallocation". The House and Senate for the State of Illinois are slated to go into session tomorrow, but there is no way to be certain that they are going to consider any of the budget related issues in this session. If they are not able to reach a decision, or are not willing to have the discussion at all, then the facility closures and their associated layoffs will be a certainty. After this session the members of the House and the Senate are not slated to meet again until the New Year, which is well past the deadline for closures. Quinn told a reporter for the Pantagraph that he wants the lawmakers to make a decision before they leave the session that begins on Tuesday. He told reporters the following about the budget issues, "We have to do some budget repair. When something needs repair, we don't look the other way." According to the Governors aides he intends to go on with the layoffs if no resolution can be reached by the deadline.

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