













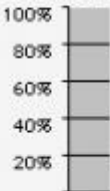








As state budget talks grind to a standstill, I've been thinking about a couple of conclusions I drew from three results in the November election:

1. [Bruce Rauner 50.3 percent, Pat Quinn, 46.3 percent](#): Against a beleaguered incumbent who had run Illinois' financial ship aground and appeared helpless to control the Legislature, Rauner spent \$27 million of his own money to score a solid victory. Bigger than [Quinn's margin of victory in 2010](#) (0.9 point) but nowhere near Rod Blagovich's [10.5-point victory](#) over Judy Baar Topinka in 2006. (Voters also were far more eager to toss Republicans from governorship in 2002 amid the brewing George Ryan scandal: Blagojevich became the first Democratic governor in 26 years by a [7.1-point margin](#).)

In other words, a decisive victory but hardly a landslide. For perspective, Jim Thompson beat Michael Howlett by nearly 30 points in 1976.

Gubernatorial Candidate		Political Party	Popular Vote	
	James R. Thompson	Republican	3,000,395	64.68%
	Michael J. Howlett	Democratic	1,610,258	34.71%
	Other (+)	-	28,387	0.61%

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<http://uselectionatlas.org/>

2. (a) When asked, “Should the Illinois Constitution be amended to require that each school district receive additional revenue, based on their number of students, from an additional 3% tax on income greater than one million dollars?” [63.6 percent of voters](#) answered yes. (b) When asked, “Shall the minimum wage in Illinois for adults over the age of 18 be raised to \$10 per hour by January 1, 2015?” [66.7 percent of voters](#) answered in the affirmative.

So Rauner wins by 4 points and the millionaire tax and \$10 minimum wage win by 27.2 and 33.4 points, respectively.

My conclusions? (1) Voters were tired of haphazard and corrupt governance under 12 years of Democratic governors. They were willing to give a Republican, any Republican, a chance to do better. (2) Voters in Illinois philosophically are miles away from the governor they elected.

To vote for Bruce Rauner and on the same ballot vote for a tax to be applied only on incomes of more than \$1 million has to be one of the greatest electoral contradictions in Illinois history. (More fun with numbers: The millionaire tax question got 376,000 more “yes” votes than Rauner got votes even though more people cast votes for governor than on the advisory question.)

That's because, I believe, voters felt contradicted. If they were behind Rauner and all he stood for, Rauner would have won as decisively as Thompson won in 1976 and the two ballot questions would have been resoundingly rejected.

The message voters delivered in electing Bruce Rauner on Nov. 4 was this: "Our state government is a mess, Democrats have made bad governors for 12 years, we'd like you to get our books straight. But we also think exactly the opposite as you on taxing and wealth disparity. Show us what you can do with our messed-up state budget and maybe we'll come around. A little."

Obviously, my interpretation of the numbers and the governor's are much different. Ever since he delivered his Budget Address in February, Rauner has toured the state talking up an [extensive package of reforms](#) that, essentially, tell Democrats to quit being Democrats.

Where I saw voters deal Rauner a pair of 3's, Rauner picked up the cards to find a handful of aces.

That's certainly how he's playing things in the budget process so far. Where voters gave him an inch to apply his deal-making acumen to the numbers, Rauner logged many miles on his "Turnaround Tour." Now he wants to leverage his broader philosophical causes for budget concessions.

This, [says House Speaker Michael Madigan](#), is mixing "apples and oranges," mixing non-budget items with budget items. Madigan's approach, says Rauner's office, amounts to "Speaker Madigan and the politicians he controls are walking away from the negotiating table and refusing to compromise on critical reforms needed to Turnaround Illinois."

Whichever version you prefer, it's a stalemate, and that's not what voters sent Rauner to Springfield to engineer.

Barely four months into his first term, Rauner has plenty of time to bring more voters over to the ideas in his **Illinois Turnaround plan**. (He's also [got the means](#) to substantially enhance the Republican presence in the Legislature in the years to come.)

First, though, he needs to demonstrate that we've got competent fiscal leadership in the executive branch again. And he needs to remember the totals from Nov. 4: Millionaire tax, 2.2 million; Bruce Rauner, 1.8 million.

<https://rebootillinois.com/2015/05/27/bruce-rauners-view-of-cards-different-than-what-voters-dealt/>