

LETTER TO THE EDITOR
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**RYAN VERDICT PROVIDES OPPORTUNITY TO
REFORM ILLINOIS POLITICAL SYSTEM**

The phrases, “that’s politics” and “politics as usual” now have different meanings in Illinois. The conviction of former Governor Ryan was the grand finale to an investigation that resulted in more than 70 convictions and exposed the underbelly of Illinois politics. While investigators have vowed to continue unpeeling the sordid layers of Illinois politics to hold accountable public officials engaged in illegal political activity, now is the time for the General Assembly to seize the day and pass reform legislation rather than relying on federal investigators.

Adopting new laws that both limit campaign contributions and stop Pay to Play politics is essential to reforming Illinois politics. To maintain the status quo leaves the impression that government at all levels is up for sale. Illinois is one of a handful of states that has absolutely no campaign contribution limits. Unregulated money flowing into the political system breeds distrust and raises questions as to whose best interest public officials are acting for: the citizenry or the contributor? Illinois has no laws limiting contributions from contractors to public officials involved with the contracts. There are also no limits on contributions made by company directors, officers and employees. Unregulated and unlimited campaign contributions are a rampant problem at the state, county, and municipal level: no government level or public official is immune from the unsavory mixture of money and politics.

Now is the time to turn the page on Illinois politics, and take action to clean up the system from the inside.