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Final Edition

**No pension for Ryan, state's high court rules**

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SPRINGFIELD-The Illinois Supreme Court Friday rejected a bid by imprisoned former Gov. George Ryan to keep the portion of his lucrative government pension that was built up before his corrupt reign as governor and secretary of state.

The high court's 6-1 decision means Ryan will get no pension. The ruling cost the disgraced former Republican governor $70,824 a year he was fighting to keep.

The lone dissenting justice Friday was Anne Burke.

"As the victims of Ryan's crimes, the taxpayers of the state of Illinois are under no obligation to now fund his retirement," Justice Robert R. Thomas wrote in the court's majority opinion.

The state General Assembly Retirement System had stripped Ryan of the entire $197,037 pension he was drawing annually up until his 2006 conviction on racketeering, conspiracy, mail fraud and other corruption charges linked to his tenure as governor and secretary of state.

But last year, a state appeals court reversed that decision, saying he should get to keep pension earnings from his 24 years as a Kankakee County official, state legislator and lieutenant governor -- posts in which he was not accused of wrongdoing.

Ryan, who turns 76 Wednesday, is represented by former Illinois Gov. James Thompson, who argued Ryan should not be penalized for the period he served before becoming a two-term secretary of state and one-term governor from 1991 to 2003.

"Reading the opinion, you sense a reflection of broad public anger toward corruption in government," Thompson said. "I understand, and I'm against corruption in government, too. But fair is fair."

Thompson said there will be no appeals and that the Ryans must "limp along on the mercy of friends. They have nothing else, no pension, no Social Security, nothing."

Ryan does not get Social Security because he is a federal inmate, and his wife, Lura Lynn Ryan, doesn't get Social Security because she spent her life as a homemaker, Thompson said. Lura Lynn Ryan has been diagnosed with terminal lung disease.

Thompson and Ryan's family hope President Obama will grant clemency to the ex-governor, who is in Terre Haute, Ind. Ryan is set for release on July 4, 2013.