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**State legislation favors city and county pensions**

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SPRINGFIELD-Chicago aldermen and Cook County board members could retire with full benefits earlier than usual under proposed pension legislation floated Tuesday by House Speaker Michael Madigan.

Madigan's package, which he presented to Gov. Ryan and other legislative leaders, also would:

-Grant 3 percent pension increases to Chicago police officers born before 1950, which would cost the Chicago Police Pension fund $ 128.2 million over the lifetimes of those covered.

-Increase pension benefits for Chicago teachers who accepted a 1993 early retirement plan. This would cost the Chicago Teachers Pension Fund $ 67.2 million over the lifetimes of those covered.

-Allow a state lawmaker on leave from the Chicago Police Department to earn police pension credit while serving in the General Assembly.

Only three legislators -- Sen. Walter Dudycz (R-Chicago), Sen. Antonio Munoz (D-Chicago) and Rep. Edward Acevedo (D-Chicago) -- are Chicago police officers, and Acevedo said he is not currently on leave. Dudycz and Munoz could not be reached for comment.

The early retirement package proposed for Chicago aldermen and Cook County board members has the backing of Mayor Daley and County Board President John Stroger.

Under the proposal, city and county politicians could retire at 55 if they have 10 years of service or at age 60 with eight years of service. Current retirement age with full benefits is 60 with 10 years of service or 65 with eight years.

Republicans in both the House and Senate predicted tough times ahead for the Madigan package, given its slant toward the Democratic domains of Chicago and Cook County governments.

"Everybody wants to add something to it. I don't think it's going to do very well, quite frankly," said Senate President James "Pate" Philip (R-Wood Dale), who rolled his eyes when asked about the aldermanic component.

Separate from Madigan's plan, another pension sweetener was being pushed by the Teamsters, who want state highway workers to be able to retire with full benefits after 20 years instead of 35 years.