

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Tim Blair

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library  
*Illinois Statecraft* Oral History project

Interview # ISC-A-L-2015-046

Tim Blair, Executive Director of the State Employees' Retirement System (SRS), was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Illinois Statecraft – Pension Crisis in Illinois* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Oct 13, 2015      Location: Springfield, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: \_\_\_\_\_

Edited by: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_      Total Time: 1:29 / 1.48 hrs.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on April 26, 2016.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

Transcript  
being processed

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# Abstract

Tim Blair, Illinois Statecraft–Pension Crisis in IL, ISC-A-L-2015-046

**Biographical Information Overview of Interview:** Tim Blair was born in April, 1969 in Springfield, Illinois. He graduated from Illiopolis High School in 1987. He earned a BA degree from Illinois State University in 1991 and earned a Masters of Business Administration from University of Illinois Springfield in 1994. Tim worked for the bipartisan Pension Laws Commission before coming to the State Retirement Systems of Illinois. He has been the system's executive director since 2002.

This interview covers the objectives and functions of the State Retirement Systems of Illinois, which covers three different groups: state employees, judges, and member of the General Assembly. The interview also explores the different age, eligibility, and benefit packages for each group. Also discussed were the sources of revenue for each system, including investments, employee contributions, and state funding. The impact of the 2008 recession was reviewed, along with major pension changes including compounded COLAs, the Rule of 85, the formula change of 1997 and the creation of Tier 2 employees in 2011. Blair also explores the role of the System during the legislature's negotiations on pension reform is submitted into the General Assembly and the role of the Retirement System in its communications with the retired and current eligible employees

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** State Retirement Systems (SRS) of Illinois; State Employee Retirement System (SERS); General Assembly Retirement System (GARS); Judges' Retirement System (JARS); compounded Cost of Living Allowances (COLA) for state pensions; state pension formula change of 1997, Rule of 85 eligibility; and Tier 2 state employees; role of SRS with Pension Legislation

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