

Pritzker: "We're Not Raising People's Taxes" For Stadium

By Jim Talamonti | The Center Square
Gov. J.B. Pritzker says there could be a special legislative session in Illinois this summer, but he won't raise people's taxes to pay for a new Chicago Bears stadium.

Pritzker spoke in Chicago on last week and said there could be a special session if the General Assembly can get together on one piece of Bears legislation.

"The first priority for me is we're not raising people's taxes to pay for a privately owned stadium, that's number one, or any stadium for a billionaire-owned family," Pritzker said.

The governor also said the legislature would be meeting again in few months. Fall veto session is scheduled Nov. 17-19 and Dec. 1-3.

After stadium and megaprojects bills stalled in the General Assembly, the Bears said last Friday that the team's board of directors voted to advance a stadium project in Hammond, Indiana, with the exact site "to be selected."

Pritzker said the Bears didn't show up for the end of Illinois' legislative session.

"From the beginning, of course, there were some fumbles that occurred by the Bears, beginning with a press conference with the mayor of Chicago talking about a multi-billion-dollar stadium that they wanted to have built with taxpayer dollars. That's not something I was ever willing to do," Pritzker said.

The governor also called out the Bears for talking to Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson after team officials issued a statement saying they were focused on Arlington Heights. "And then late April, it turns out they're talking to the mayor of the city of Chicago. So, look, I think all of that has to be worked out by the Bears," Pritzker said.

Pritzker said people in Indiana would pay higher sales taxes and tolls if the Bears move there, and he

didn't think the people of Illinois would want that.

State Rep. Dan Ugaste, R-Geneva, plans to file a bill by early next week that would prevent local taxing bodies from getting stadium development money from taxpayers.

Ugaste said his proposal would also benefit the Bears.

"I've listened to their public comments, what they say they need. That's what I'm trying to provide, as well as protecting the local taxpayers in the area and provide property tax relief for everyone throughout the state," Ugaste said.

State Rep. Martin McLaughlin, R-Barrington Hills, is also planning to introduce legislation aimed at keeping the Bears in Illinois.

McLaughlin's Taxpayer and Investment Protection Act applies to private developments with more than \$2.5 billion in investments in counties with more than 1 million people.

According to McLaughlin's website, the proposal provides long-term property tax certainty for investors, new revenue from surrounding businesses, infrastructure improvements, and year-round economic activity and jobs.

Taxpayer protections would come in the form of mandatory independent fiscal neutrality certification, negotiated property tax with 2.5% annual growth, infrastructure support with guardrails and a requirement that infrastructure support be repaid if the developer breaks a mandated 30-year commitment.

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(ANSWERS ON PAGE 6)

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Mule, for one
- 5 Unruly group
- 8 Bygone fliers
- 12 Lawman Wyatt
- 13 Stop — dime
- 14 Ornamental jug
- 15 Heart charts
- 16 Business card no.
- 17 Calf-length
- 18 Stop
- 20 Son of Erik the Red
- 22 "War and Peace" author
- 26 Violin stroke
- 29 Cyclades island
- 30 British verb ending
- 31 Subject, usually
- 32 Fellow
- 33 Healthy
- 34 Internet address
- 35 Continent north of Afr.
- 36 Disinfectant brand
- 37 Oscar-winning actress in "The Fighter"
- 40 Arizona tribe
- 41 Prisoner
- 45 Conspiracy
- 47 Corn core

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53						54				55		

- 49 Big-screen format
- 50 — song (cheaply)
- 51 Lincoln nickname
- 52 Zilch
- 53 Swindles
- 54 Dogpatch adjective
- 55 Musician's jobs

DOWN

- 1 Future flower
- 2 Cod cousin
- 3 PTA and NEA, e.g.
- 4 Delta follower
- 5 Slogan
- 6 Count starter

- 7 Inflated party prop
- 8 Big rigs
- 9 Fans of pop icon Taylor
- 10 — Talks (online lecture series)
- 11 Lanka lead-in
- 19 Stitch
- 21 Golf's Ernie
- 23 Pageant crown
- 24 City on a fjord
- 25 Holler
- 26 "E Pluribus —"
- 27 Skin opening
- 28 Megaphone's kin

- 32 "Suffs" or "Rent," e.g.
- 33 Cheyenne's state
- 35 Mentalist's gift
- 36 Cariou of "Blue Bloods"
- 38 Smidgens
- 39 Slander in print
- 42 Mine, in Marseille
- 43 Tart flavor
- 44 Alimony recipients
- 45 USMC rank
- 46 Privy
- 48 Japanese sash

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