Good News, Bad News, Good News

(Acceptance; Rejection; Employees Getting Paid)

First the good news:

SPRINGFIELD – Asked Wednesday whether he would honor a judge’s ruling requiring him to pay 578 state employees from the correct state fund, Governor Rauner said “Yes.”

“A state judge ruled that Comptroller Mendoza can decide where she wants to pay state employees from, which funds that she wants to use,” The Governor said. “We don’t agree with that ruling, however we’re going to honor it.”

Then the bad news:

A few hours later, The Governor appealed that decision.

Rather than govern and try to work out a balanced budget as the State Constitution requires him to propose; Governor Rauner is wasting more taxpayer money appealing the court order that allowed 578 state employees to be paid Wednesday.

Judge Robert LeChien ruled against the Governor, saying the state Comptroller’s Office has the discretion to pay employees from the appropriate funds. Rauner had sought to hoard money in the state garage and facilities maintenance funds, which the General Assembly had voted to designate as the correct source of payroll for the garage and maintenance workers. Rauner had signed that appropriation bill into law.

Those funds are $93 million in the black. Now the Governor wants to raid the General Revenue Fund, which is $12 billion in the hole in large part because of his failure for three years to introduce a balanced budget. The court said "No." Rauner filed his appeal Wednesday.

Then the Good News:

In that brief window between the Governor saying he would honor the ruling and then appealing it, the Dept. of Central Management Services re-submitted the vouchers for those 578 employees,
which our office immediately began processing, so that employees can receive their paychecks on Friday as scheduled.

The payroll is currently being processed by the office’s automated system so that money can transferred to employees’ banks and available for regularly scheduled direct deposit on Friday. Paychecks for employees who receive paper checks are on schedule to be processed on time as well.

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