

Bond Case Briefs

Municipal Finance Law Since 1971

The Late Great State of Illinois.

Political dysfunction as far as the eye can see.

Payson, Ill.

As the sun rose, the first frost of the season flashed silver across the mowed fields of Adams County, Illinois, and the same small group of regulars gathered at the Fast Stop gas station in Payson. They get their coffee here most mornings before commencing the day's business. (One definition of progress: Americans used to worry about getting gas from a coffee shop; now we think nothing of getting coffee from a gas station.) Most of the guys are retired or close to it—firefighters, farmers, machinists. All but a couple of them are Republicans, and when they talk politics, as a visitor from out of town asked them to do one morning not long ago, they speak with an air of weary resignation. Like most people who've bothered to pay attention, they're pretty certain what will happen on November 6, when the state decides who its governor will be for the next four years—the incumbent Republican, Bruce Rauner, or the Democrat challenger, J. B. Pritzker.

"We were just debating whether there's such a thing as a conservative Democrat in Illinois anymore," one of the regulars told the visitor. "We decided there are not."

Another regular agreed. "Just about everybody around here owns a gun," he said. "And nowadays if you own a gun in Illinois, you're a Republican."

"Basically," said a third, "we're never going to win another election statewide. The numbers just don't add up. Which means not much is going to change."

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by Andrew Ferguson

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