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A Junk Bond Rating for Illinois Is on the Ballot.

The state's standing in the municipal-debt market will depend on voters approving a "fair tax" amendment, but which party holds power in Washington may also play a role.

Illinois doesn't get as much attention as some other Midwestern states around Election Day. It's no secret why: Unlike Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin, it's not even remotely close to being a toss-up for the presidency.

What it lacks in White House intrigue, however, it more than makes up for in its own drama.

Illinois has long held the unenviable distinction of being the lowest-rated U.S. state. Its retirement systems are so underfunded, and have been for such a long time, that the phrase "Illinois pensions" is practically used as shorthand among Republicans in Washington as a reason the federal government shouldn't send a huge aid package to state and local governments to help them get through the pandemic.

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Bloomberg Opinion

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October 28, 2020, 4:00 AM PDT