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## 02/06/1989 - Governors Proposed Budget

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

GOVERNOR'S PROPOSED BUDGET

CHARLESTON, IL--According to Eastern Illinois University President Dr. Stan Rives, Governor Thompson's budget recommendations for educational funding in Illinois next year contains both "good news" and "bad news."

The "good news" is that the Governor is proposing a higher priority for education in the FY90 state budget. During the past decade, the proportion of the State's budget devoted to education has declined from 43 to 37 percent--a very significant reduction of the level of support for elementary, secondary, and higher education over the past ten years.

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Rives said he read the Governor's statement to mean he proposes to reverse that declining level of support for education. He said, "Several of us in education have been proposing that at least half of all new resources available to Illinois be devoted to education, and Governor Thompson's recommendation moves us in that direction. The Governor's recent State of the State address clearly stated the importance of a strong educational system to the economic development of Illinois. The higher priority assigned to education by the Governor is good news indeed."

The "bad news," according to Rives, is that the proposed budget for next year under the Governor's recommendation would provide less than half of what was recommended by the Illinois Board of Higher Education for Eastern Illinois University next year. The IBHE approved an FY90 budget of \$51,803,300 for Eastern. The Governor's recommendation would provide a budget of approximately \$47,800,000--a \$4 million reduction from what the IBHE recommended.

"We should also recognize that the Governor's proposed budget for education is contingent upon General Assembly approval of the cigarette tax increase proposed by the Governor. While I support the proposed tax hike on cigarettes, adequate support for elementary, secondary, and higher education will ultimately require an increase in the state income tax. That is not likely to happen without the support of Speaker of the House Mike Madigan and whoever is elected as the Mayor of Chicago," he added.

"What Illinois requires, in my judgment, is tax reform which reduces our reliance on the property tax to support elementary-secondary education and increases our reliance on the fairer income tax for support of education at all levels. Senator Woodyard and Representative Weaver are advocating such a change and I feel those of us who want an improved education system for Illinois need to get behind the effort of our two local members of the General Assembly.

"On balance, there is more good news than bad news in Governor Thompson's message. The Governor proposes to reverse a decade-long trend for reducing the percent of the Illinois budget devoted to education. The problems created in a decade cannot be solved in a single fiscal year, and I applaud the direction proposed by the Governor," Rives said.

"However," Rives said, "it is encouraging that the people of Illinois are calling for better education at all levels, that the Illinois Farm Bureau is again calling for tax reform with less reliance on the property tax and more on the income tax, that the Illinois State Chamber of Commerce leadership is calling for a higher priority for education in the state's budget, and that Governor Thompson is making proposals to strengthen education."