



February 26, 2018

Dear Illinois State University Graduate Assistants,

Today, I extend my hearty congratulations to you as you file for recognition of your union. No day could be more fitting for your announcement as the Supreme Court hears oral arguments in a case designed to limit your power by seeking to divide working people. I share your belief in the strength of unions to improve your working conditions and your students' learning conditions, and to ensure that our public university system works for everyone.

You proved your strength in numbers in December when your rallies and direct action helped defeat a proposal in the Republican federal tax bill that would have taxed your stipends. By coming together and making your voices heard, I believe you will continue fighting for and winning improvements in higher education.

Unlike Bruce Rauner, as governor I will make sure the state recognizes the value of partnering with organized labor to ensure economic justice and fairness. As your governor, I will work with stakeholders to change the law so we can expand the opportunity to form a union to research assistants.

Illinois' colleges and universities are the backbone of our local economies. Institutions like ISU are some of our state's greatest economic engines yet Bruce Rauner has done lasting damage to local communities and to our education system through manufactured crises and three years of instability.

Bruce Rauner has caused a loss of faith in our institutions of higher learning. Some teaching assistants saw their stipends cut in half as a result of his mismanagement. We have seen double-digit declines in enrollment at several Illinois universities and layoffs of faculty and staff. Rauner's clear indifference toward public universities has shaken people's confidence in our state's commitment to higher education. As a result, tens of thousands of students have left the state. Many will never return.

When I am governor, you will have a partner in Springfield who understands the value of the work you do. I will stand in solidarity with you then as I do now, sharing your commitment to make our public university system work for every student.

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'JB Pritzker', written over the typed name.

JB Pritzker  
Democratic Candidate for Governor