

Gubernatorial hopeful Biss pays Glenview a visit

JEREMY TURLEY
Freelance Reporter

Fixing the pension system, reforming the state income tax and taking back the Democratic Party were the topics of conversation when gubernatorial candidate and current Illinois State Sen. Daniel Biss (D-Evanston) visited the Glenview Park Center on Thursday, Jan. 25.

An audience of about 50 retirees listened as Biss, who currently represents the 9th District, which includes Glenview, outlined his perspective on the major issues.

The candidate said Springfield only works for the richest Illinoisans, and that he would give middle-class families and small businesses a fair shot if elected as governor.

"I've found myself running for governor in a moment that I think constitutes a fight for the future of Illinois and a fight for the soul of the Democratic Party," Biss said. "I think this is the moment to build a state that works for the rest of us, and I think this is an opportunity to get it right in Illinois."

Biss spoke for approximately 10 minutes about his progressive vision before opening the floor to questions from the audience.

Longtime Glenview resident Ron Malik set the tone with a few hardball questions about Illinois' immense pension liabilities and House Speaker Michael Madigan's grip on the Capitol.

Malik said he became upset with state Democrats

after they failed to solve Illinois' chronic issues when they had control of the governorship. He blamed many of the party's ills on Madigan, who has held his position for all but two years since 1983.

Biss painted Madigan as a sort of foil to his political career, citing several races in which Madigan supported his Democratic opponent. He also said the speaker has outlasted his usefulness in Springfield.

Biss said if he were elected, he would "have the guts" to stand up to Madigan when disagreements arise, unlike some of his opponents.

Malik, who identifies as a Republican, said he remains undecided, but voting for Biss wouldn't be out of the question. Still, he wasn't completely con-

vinced by Biss' assurance that Madigan wouldn't continue to manipulate state politics.

"His ideas are good, but can he get them through? I don't know," Malik told The Lantern after the event. "If Madigan wants it to go through, it goes through."

Most of the questions raised by those in attendance had to do with the state's dire financial circumstances. In response, Biss said the adoption of graduated income tax rates would carve out enough revenue to properly fund the state's pension system, schools and social services.

Biss said the wealthy

should pay higher rates than everyone else, though he did not specify an exact percentage. Currently, all Illinoisans pay a rate of 3.75 percent, regardless of income. Biss called this flat tax "the original sin in Illinois budgeting."

Glenview resident Carol Salinger was a science teacher in Morton Grove for 20 years and now receives a pension from the state. After hearing him speak, Salinger said she was confident Biss could address the pension system and would vote for him in the March Democratic primary election.

Salinger added that she couldn't support Biss' millionaire and billionaire op-

ponents, including Democrats J.B. Pritzker and Chris Kennedy and Republican incumbent Bruce Rauner.

"Money is power, and power is money. I don't have the power, and I don't have the money," Salinger said. "I need someone who can understand my situation and my children's situation."

For more information on Biss' campaign, visit www.danielbiss.com.

As part of Glenview's political series, Kennedy visited Park Center to discuss the gubernatorial race on Wednesday, Feb. 7. A story on his visit will appear in a future issue of The Lantern.

FREE EVENT

What Does It Feel Like To Have Alzheimer's?

Virtual Dementia Experience
Thursday, February 15th • 10 am - 3 pm

Come see, hear, feel and experience the complex world of those facing the challenge of living with dementia. *This immersive experience is not to be missed!*

SESSIONS EVERY 30 MIN.
BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

RSVP to:
Mary Ann Pappone
708.829.9074

mpappone@anthemmemorycare.com

EVENT HELD AT:

EMERALD PLACE
1879 CHESTNUT AVENUE
GLENVIEW



NOW OPEN



Gubernatorial candidate and current Illinois State Sen. Daniel Biss (D-Evanston) speaks on Jan. 25 at the Glenview Park Center. JEREMY TURLEY/22ND CENTURY MEDIA