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**Ethics and taxes; Gov. Quinn spends his first day on the job tackling the daunting task of cleaning up government. But as for climbing a mountain of debt and fixing the rest of the state's ills, he had little to offer off the bat. And as for the threat of raising taxes . . .**

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Staff reporters

SPRINGFIELD-Gov. Quinn on Friday signaled plans to delay the 2010 gubernatorial primary and push ethics reforms and a statewide construction program this spring.

But in his first full day as Illinois' 41st governor, Quinn was murky on how he intends to handle a gigantic budget shortfall.

With one of former Sen. Paul Simon's bow ties in his pocket, Quinn got out of the gates by signing an executive order re-establishing an ethics commission he founded as lieutenant governor. He met with the state's four other constitutional officers in a show of goodwill. And he laid out a glimpse of an ambitious spring legislative agenda.

"My hope is between now and the 31st of May to have the most productive legislative session, the most reform-minded legislative session, in recent memory in Illinois," said Quinn, who was sworn in Thursday night after Illinois senators voted 59-0 to oust Rod Blagojevich.

"That is what the public wants; and I think if we do what the public wants, we'll do pretty well," he said.

The 60-year-old Chicago Democrat, who spent his first night as governor in the Executive Mansion Thursday night, would not commit to whether he would run for governor in 2010. But he proposed pushing the Feb. 2, 2010, primary to Sept. 7, 2010, two months ahead of the general election, to shrink the duration and expense of the campaign. Under the current schedule, candidates must file nominating petitions this fall.

"We don't need perpetual campaigns and perpetual campaign fund-raising in Illinois," he said.

Quinn also wants a multibillion-dollar construction program in place for the summer construction season.

The new governor has been silent on whether he would adhere to the same pledges Blagojevich maintained for six years against raising the state sales or income taxes, the two main sources of revenue for state government. On Friday, Senate President John Cullerton (D-Chicago) put a possible income tax hike in play, expressing a desire that it be among the options lawmakers consider to keep Illinois solvent.

"We have major economic challenges so nothing should be off the table, including the income tax," Rikeesha Phelon, Cullerton's spokeswoman, said Friday.

Because of the tanking economy, state budget forecasters have placed the Illinois budget deficit at nearly $3 billion as of December and predict more red ink in the months ahead.

"I'm going to find out in the next six, seven weeks, just how deep our deficit is in Illinois," Quinn said. "We will have a rescue plan, a blueprint, to pay our bills.

"I will always put taxpayers first," he added. "I believe in putting taxpayers in the driver's seat. And I understand the importance of holding down taxes."

Quinn flew back to Chicago Friday with House Speaker Michael Madigan (D-Chicago). In the 16th floor governor's office in the Thompson Center, he met with Treasurer Alexi Giannoulias, Comptroller Dan Hynes, Attorney General Lisa Madigan and Secretary of State Jesse White.

"The last time that happened under Gov. Blagojevich was July 1, 2003," Lisa Madigan said, "so I know already that Gov. Quinn is going to be a very different governor than our former governor."

Giannoulias had yet to be elected as of that date. He said Friday was the first time he's ever been in the governor's 16th floor workspace.