Almost 2 Years Without a Budget: The Impasse is Hurting Students & Job-Seekers

- 130,000 Illinois students were promised Monetary Award Program (MAP) grants for 2017 that may go unfunded; many students have dropped out.
- Illinois’ state higher ed system is on the brink of collapse due to $2.3B in cuts over the last 2 years.
- Illinois ranks a dismal 50th in state support for public education as schools are struggling even more by Illinois’ failure to fund transportation, special education and school lunches due to the budget crisis.
- 35,000 children from low-income families no longer receive child care subsidies to help pay for daycare; some parents no longer can afford continuing to go to school or work.
- Almost 15,000 youth have lost access to after school services at 122 sites around the state.
- Despite steadily rising rates of opioid addiction across the state, over 24,000 fewer residents were admitted to treatment services.
- Illinois’ 29 rape crisis centers were forced to lay off staff and cut hours resulting in waitlists for survivors seeking help.
- The state no longer funds training for 57,000 law enforcement officers.
- 24 counties shut down services that divert youth from incarceration (Redeploy Illinois program).
- Employment and training programs have been cut across Illinois, denying job seekers of these cost-effective programs that can help them overcome barriers to success in the 21st century economy.

It’s Only Going to Get Worse - Make Your Voice Heard!

We need Legislators state-wide to know we care!

The message is simple: “My name is ___. I’m your constituent. It’s time Illinois passes a responsible budget. The damage is real and the consequences matter to me!”

- Call, send an email, or write a letter to your State Representative and State Senator! Find their contact information at bit.ly/ILLegislativeDirectory.
- Tell Gov. Rauner your opinion. Call him at 217-782-0244 or email through bit.ly/ContactGovRauner

Spread the word! Educate your family, friends, and colleagues about the destructive impacts of not having a state budget.

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Why Don’t We Have a Budget?

To pass, a state budget must be approved by the House, Senate, and Governor. For almost two years, a deadlock between Governor Rauner and Republican lawmakers on one side and Democratic lawmakers on the other has prevented this from happening. In January 2015, the Governor and Illinois General Assembly chose not to permanently extend a tax increase to help address state budget issues. Now, our policymakers have to decide between restoring lost revenue and allowing even more cuts to services that strengthen families, communities, and the economy. Bi-partisan negotiations have failed and the Governor refuses to sign a budget unless it is balanced and addresses his policy agenda (bit.ly/TurnAroundAgenda).

Illinois does not need just any budget - it needs a RESPONSIBLE budget: one that is balanced, collecting enough revenue to fund programs that support families, communities, and the economy.

The Budget Crisis Hurts Us ALL

The budget crisis means organizations that need state dollars to operate aren’t getting them. Social safety net programs for drug addiction, domestic violence, violence prevention, and mental health services are just some examples of those being shut down or severely limited. Many organizations are forced to deplete their cash reserves in hopes they can continue providing much-needed services. Others are already folding or cutting services and laying off staff. Illinois’ most vulnerable populations are suffering the most. And it will only get worse.

Without a budget, infrastructure for hospitals, bridges, roads, and dams are left without much-needed repairs. Jobs are being lost as the State fails to pay contracted agencies.

Even for those of us who may not yet have felt the impact, things are going to get worse. Eventually, Illinois taxpayers will have to pay more to make up for costs incurred today. This means more cuts to social safety net programs and higher taxes down the line.

Get our lawmakers to do their jobs!

✓ Stay informed! Follow us on Twitter @ILBudgetFacts.
✓ Keep up-to-date with the Responsible Budget Coalition at responsiblebudget.org.
✓ Use #lolillinois to share your thoughts.
✓ Questions? Email us at ILBudgetFacts@gmail.com.
✓ REMEMBER to contact your State Representative, State Senator, and the Governor!

This newsletter is brought to you by a concerned group of students from Loyola Law School’s Legislation and Policy Clinic. Neither the contents of this newsletter nor the work of the Clinic necessarily reflect the positions of Loyola University Chicago. The purpose of the newsletter is not to point the finger at one party or another, rather to keep students informed, help people understand how this budget impasse is hurting us all, AND encourage you to take action!