Almost 2 Years Without a Budget: Doctors, Patients & Hospitals are Hurting

- The State owes millions of dollars to hospitals, stalling much needed upgrades to facilities, salaries for doctors, and payments to vendors.

- Over 200,000 state employees are without healthcare. Despite paying their portion of the premiums, they’re being asked to pay up-front for surgeries and other procedures because Illinois is not paying its share of health insurance bills.

- 80,000 Illinois residents have already lost access to mental health services.

- 34% fewer women received life-saving screenings for breast and cervical cancer.

- Institutionalization rather than home care is on the rise, after 21 home-healthcare agencies serving low-income seniors and people with disabilities have been forced to close, reduce service, or cap intakes.

- Illinois’ 29 rape crisis centers were forced to lay off staff and cut hours resulting in waitlists for survivors seeking help.

- Despite steadily rising rates of opioid addiction across the state, over 24,000 fewer residents were admitted to treatment services.

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 hand 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 or 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).

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 own cash reserves in hopes they can continue providing much-need services. Others already have folded or cut services and laid off staff. Illinois’ most vulnerable 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. That 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.
✓ Stay 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! 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!