

**Media Contact:**

**Jennifer Cushman**, Field and Policy Specialist, Responsible Budget Coalition  
[jennifer@responsiblebudget.org](mailto:jennifer@responsiblebudget.org), 646.326.4279

**Available for Comment in State Capitol Following Budget Address:**

**Dan Lesser**, Coordinator, Responsible Budget Coalition  
[danlesser@povertylaw.org](mailto:danlesser@povertylaw.org), 708.927.8796

**Responsible Budget Coalition:  
Another Missed Opportunity for Governor Rauner to Lead**

*Shortly after Governor Bruce Rauner's state budget address on Wednesday, February 15, 2017, the Responsible Budget Coalition (RBC) released the following statement:*

Today, Governor Rauner missed another opportunity to show leadership and finally move Illinois toward a fully funded state budget with adequate revenue so Illinois families and communities can thrive.

**Illinois is now in its second year without a budget, an unprecedented crisis driven in large part by the governor's insistence on holding the state budget hostage to his non-budget policy and political agenda.** The human toll resulting from the governor's failed leadership is widespread and well-documented.

**Our higher education system is in tatters**, with funding slashed by billions and state tuition grants to low-income students no longer being funded. Freshmen enrollment at most of our state universities has declined by 20-25%.

**Our social services system has been equally devastated.** Service providers across Illinois have exhausted their reserves, fully drawn on their lines of credit, laid off staff and cut back on services. Indeed, over 1 million Illinoisans have lost services like meals for homebound seniors, treatment for individuals struggling with mental health issues, and home visits for at-risk young mothers.

**The lack of a fully funded budget is also causing immense damage to our state's economic future.** In the past week, two national credit rating agencies have harshly criticized Illinois' fiscal position on Governor Rauner's watch. Illinois currently has the worst credit rating in the nation and is only two notches above junk-bond status. This poor fiscal position makes it much more expensive to borrow the funds needed to meet our obligations, like unpaid bills to state vendors and social service providers.

**Instead of providing leadership, Governor Rauner today attempted to shift blame and made excuses. Our state needs the chief executive to show leadership in this crisis, not deflect responsibility. Governor Rauner must put politics aside and work toward a fully funded state budget with adequate revenue now.**

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[The Responsible Budget Coalition](#) (RBC) is a broad-based coalition of more than 300 organizations unified in our support for adequate revenue to fully fund vital state services and make smart investments. The Coalition includes organizations that serve children, families, veterans, seniors, immigrant and refugee families and people with disabilities; education groups concerned about early learning, K-12 and higher education; labor unions, and faith-based and civic groups.