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Responsible Budget Coalition Calls on State's Leaders to Propose a Complete Budget

SPRINGFIELD (IL) – John Bouman, President of the [Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law](#) and Chair of the [Responsible Budget Coalition](#)'s Executive Committee, released the following statement on Tuesday, December 27th, regarding the expiration of the stopgap spending plan and the lack of a state budget:

“Last June, Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner and state lawmakers adopted a “stopgap” spending plan that was merely a bandaid to the ongoing budget crisis and essentially a political move to avoid public criticism that would threaten lawmakers’ re-election campaigns.

On December 31st, that “plan” is set to expire. And with the plan’s expiration will come even more uncertainty for the state’s eroding social service and higher education infrastructure, and even more pain for Illinois communities and the state’s business climate.

If the “stopgap” plan expires, service providers whose contracts with the state are paid out of General Revenue Funds will not be paid for services rendered on or after January 1st until there is a budget agreement. For these providers—at least the ones still in business—this is a continuation of the failure of our state to pay them for the vital services they deliver. They did not receive payments for Fiscal Year 2016 until Fiscal Year 2017 started, and most haven’t received payments for services rendered since July 1st. The stopgap’s expiration makes it official—no payments for services rendered in the new year until there’s a budget.

But this doesn’t just mean that providers who have not been getting paid will be right back where they were before the stopgap. Their situation will actually be much worse.

They currently have less reserves and lines of credit than when the budget impasse started, and will be far less able to withstand the hardship of not getting paid going forward.

As has been the case for the entire crisis, at-risk Illinoisans will suffer the most.

Families struggling with mental illness, young people experiencing homelessness, and survivors recovering from sexual assault all will continue to lose services. Grants that allow low-income students to go to college, subsidized childcare that allows parents to work, and supports that allow seniors to remain independent, are crucial to the strength of our entire state. The [most recent survey of service providers](#), commissioned last summer, found that over one million Illinoisans have lost services due to the impasse. That number has grown since, and it’s a

phenomenon that is reaching every corner of Illinois. And the chaos and uncertainty of the budget impasse continues to depress the business climate. All of us suffer when our state fails to fund the public investments that allow our families, communities and economy to thrive.

The *only* acceptable end to the Illinois budget crisis is a fully funded, year-long, responsible budget. Such a budget must provide sufficient revenue to stop making cuts, repair previous damage, and make smart investments.

We call on the leaders of both political parties to present fully funded, year-long, complete budget proposals. Specify which line items you would cut and what new revenue sources you would tap. Have the integrity to truly serve the people you were elected to represent and get the job done. We are one Illinois, and we need a state budget that works for all of us.”

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[The Responsible Budget Coalition](#) (RBC) is a large, diverse non-partisan coalition of more than 300 organizations unified in our support for adequate revenue to pay for 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.