



# Illinois Statehouse News

## Quinn to sign state budget Thursday

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By Benjamin Yount Illinois Statehouse News

SPRINGFIELD — Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn may sign the 2012 state budget Thursday, but the spending plan is not a one-and-done deal. “The budget is an on-going process,” said Quinn. “We have to work on it 365 days of the fiscal year.”

Quinn, who introduced a nearly \$36 billion budget, said he is not happy with the \$33.4 billion spending plan that Illinois lawmakers sent him, and he wants more spending in education and human services.

But while Quinn can shift around money in the budget, he cannot order more spending, said state Rep. Sara Feigenholtz, D-Chicago. “The governor has some limitations when he is acting on the budget,” said Feigenholtz. “He cannot add. He can only (order) line-item reductions.”

But Feigenholtz, who helped write the human services portion of the state budget, said Quinn “should come back to the Legislature to ask us for more” money this fall. And Quinn agreed.

“There may be some legislators that want to revisit certain areas (of the budget),” said Quinn. “I think it’s really imperative that legislators not say, ‘We did something in the spring,’ and that’s the last word.”

State Rep. Will Davis, R-Crestwood, who crafted the education portion of the state budget, agreed with Quinn that more needs to be done, and said he hopes the governor acts.

Quinn “needs to think about the people that supported him in the last election, as well as those who support his efforts in the Legislature. And if he still has lump sum dollars available, that’s where he needs to spend the money,” Davis said.

But Republicans remain skeptical of any attempt to spend more.

State Sen. Matt Murphy, R-Paletine, said that if Illinois is ever going to roll back this year’s 67-percent personal income tax increases, then the state needs to start living within its means.

“If Gov. Quinn and the Democrats cannot make the tough choices on spending now, after a tax increase, how will they be able to make those tough choices down the road?” asked Murphy.

Feigenholtz said all lawmakers want to keep that promise, but the state needs to provide services.

Davis said the tweaking of the 2012 state budget is going to affect how lawmakers craft the 2013 state budget.

“I’m going to be less concerned about bi-partisanship,” said Davis. “I’m going to be more concerned about making sure that I provide the resources to the programs that are important to people across the state.”