

NEWS...



From State Representative Sara Feigenholtz

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Local lawmakers united in calling for end to budget impasse

SPRINGFIELD -- With a deadline for a state budget rapidly approaching, North Side lawmakers joined together on Thursday in calling on their colleagues and the governor to put egos and politics aside and make a deal to prevent continued financial chaos in Illinois.

"Together is the only way this gets solved. No one cares about finger pointing and blame. It's well past that. I'm committed to doing my part and am calling on everyone else to show the leadership and responsibility that the public expects," said Senate President John J. Cullerton, who represents the Senate's 6th District communities on the North Side of Chicago.

Echoing Cullerton's public appeal were local state Representatives Ann M. Williams and Sara Feigenholtz. The three lawmakers collectively represent neighborhoods including West Lakeview, Roscoe Village, Northcenter, Lincoln Park, Lincoln Square, Ravenswood and Wrigleyville.

"The consequences of failing to pass a complete and balanced budget are dire - keeping our neighborhood schools in crisis, devastating higher education, decimating critical human services programs, adding billions of dollars to our unpaid debt and bringing the state's bond rating to junk bond status," said Rep. Williams, who represents the 11th House District.

"We need to stop the political posturing and move Illinois forward ... now. Anything short of a passing a complete balanced budget is insufficient, irresponsible and wrong," Williams said.

Rep. Feigenholtz joined in calling for an end to a budget impasse that has become increasingly inhumane.

"When domestic violence shelters are closing and the state stops funding breast cancer screenings, who really cares about political winners and losers? There are no winners in this. Stop the nonsense and let's do the right thing. Too many people have already been hurt," said Feigenholtz, who represents the 12th House District.

The show of unity from the North Side trio comes as the state enters the final hours of its budget year with no final budget ready for the new year that begins July 1. Illinois has already gone two years without a budget under Gov. Bruce Rauner.

The result has been soaring debts, deep layoffs and cuts at public universities and social service agencies. Domestic violence shelters have lost funding, as have programs that offer breast cancer screenings to lower income women.

Now, thousands of state construction jobs are jeopardized as roadwork would shutdown next week if there's no budget. The Illinois Lottery would also be unable to payout big winnings and could be kicked out of the multi-state lottery games.

Cullerton, Williams and Feigenholtz said the chaos must end and the most important thing is to get a budget, restore stability and begin the recovery. The Illinois General Assembly continues in session to try to reach those goals.

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