

STATEMENT FROM ILLINOIS ACTION FOR CHILDREN ON THE CONTINUED STATE BUDGET IMPASSE

Once again, it is June 1. Once again, Illinois does not have a budget for the upcoming fiscal year (or the current one, for that matter). We commend the Illinois Senate for passing a balanced budget that includes adequate revenue and funding for our state's priorities, but the Senate alone cannot get this job done.

With each passing day of ultimatums, accusations, and failed grand bargains, the children and families of this state suffer the most. As our elected officials vie for "victory" in this battle, we have reached the point where you have to ask...what of Illinois will be left for the victors to claim?

Illinois owes more than \$14.3 billion to vendors who are going unpaid for the contracted work they have already provided to the state. A great deal of these vendors are nonprofit organizations providing critically-important services to Illinois' children and families. Many have already closed because they can't pay their bills as a result of the state's inability to pay theirs. Those that have not closed are standing on the financial precipice as we speak.

The state's human services infrastructure — the safety net that Illinois' most vulnerable children and families rely upon — is crumbling under the weight of this crisis. For Illinois to be both compassionate and competitive, it has to pay these job creators what they are owed. There is no other choice.

The situation is already dire and no one involved can erase the damage that has already been done — but the arrival of belated political courage between now and July 1 can at least ensure that more damage is not done.

As we have time and time again, we call on the General Assembly to pass and the Governor to sign a budget with adequate and sustainable revenue that brings stability and certainty to the families and providers in Illinois before it is too late.

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Illinois Action for Children