



# **Speakers: Failing to set the budget, failing Illinois families**

by Cynthia Goode, Intern  
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**ALTON - Long-time IMPACT CIL consumer Amy Foster**, affected by the now eight-month long Illinois budget crisis, cried at a press conference at the IMPACT CIL Center on Tuesday and said she sees “no hope” with the present situation.

Across the state affecting a total of 250 both civic- and faith-based organizations are facing the detrimental loss of funds from the lawmaker’s refusal to balance and set the state budget.

On Tuesday, **IMPACT**, located at 2735 E. Broadway in Alton, hosted a budget press conference to plea for the thousands of lives being affected by job layoffs, suspensions and closures of state-funded facilities that were designed to help the disabled, homeless, elderly, and funeral burial for the poor.

**Bill Kreeb**, Director/CEO of Leslie Bates Neighborhood House of East St. Louis, said: “It has come to the point of our adult day care center closing. We are also losing the service of the Neighborhood House that helps with after school children whose parents can’t be at home because of their work. Holy Angels, a women’s shelter, has not been paid and the program for burying the poor has been reduced to cremations.”

Of the eight key note speakers, **Linda White**, the director over the youth and family counseling for Catholic Children’s Home + Aid, came to literal tears when passionately speaking on the devastation the budget crisis is having on the children utilizing the services, which provide to help them escape incarceration, neglect, homelessness, being on welfare and abuse.

“Eighty-five percent of our funding is public funding we have not been paid since July,” she said. “Two of the three programs have been cut; one by 50 percent and the other by 60 percent. Just since July these services give the youth we help an alternative. Our CCBYS Comprehensive Community based Youth Services program helps 24 hours a day, seven days a week to bring youth into alternative homes. These are boys and girls that without these services, are hopeless. It cost \$1,011,000 a year to imprison these youth we are saving the state millions of dollars. These programs helped 500 youth last year and if we don’t continue their lives are at risk.”

**Cathy Contario, Executive Director at IMPACT**, reiterates the real truth that this delay to put the revenue in order is harming the working families, the economy, communities, public safety, women, children, and seniors on a significant level.

“We are here as a united front, It’s time to put family back on the front agenda, to put the citizens of Illinois first,” she said.

**Alton Budget Press Conference speakers’ lineup was as follows:**

MC (Speaker 1): **Cathy Contarino**, Executive Director, [IMPACT CIL](#)

Speaker 2: **Dane Rockefeller**, IMPACT CIL consumer

Speaker 3: **Amy Foster**, IMPACT CIL consumer

Speaker 4: **Jonathan Becker**, Executive Director, [Senior Services Plus](#)

Speaker 5: **Linda White**, [Children's Home + Aid](#)

Speaker 6: **Homeless Youth Program Client of Children's Home + Aid**

Speaker 7: **Lieutenant Seth Stinnett**, [Alton Police Department](#)

Speaker 8: **Capt. Craig Knight**, [Granite City Police Department](#)



Each speaker emphasized different detrimental occurrences because of the lack of a state budget and encouraged lawmakers to find some reasonable solution to the long-standing impasse.