

Rep. Bourne pushes to fund critical human services; open schools on time

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LITCHFIELD - With less than two weeks left until the State of Illinois begins its second year without a budget, Representative Avery Bourne (R-Raymond) and her colleagues are calling for a vote on legislation that will allow schools to open on time in the fall and fund critical human service programs. House Republicans have proposed two bills, House Bill 6583 and House Bill 6585, both of which are stopgap, fully funded, bills to provide stability to Illinois.

In addition to providing critical and stable funding, the House Republican stopgap budget plan is unique in the following way: It actually identifies sources of revenue to

pay for its spending. The House Democrat budget that failed in the Senate was \$7 billion out of balance, and sought to spend more money in a single fiscal year than any budget has ever contained.

“Obviously, this is not ideal, but this is the most responsible course of action given the lack of movement on a balanced budget,” stated Rep. Bourne. “The House was only scheduled to be in Session on Wednesday of each week and even that has been cancelled by House Speaker Madigan. My hope is that the Majority Party will call us to Session and allow these two bills to be called for a vote immediately.”

HB 6583 was proposed as an alternative to keep schools open and fund programs like Agricultural Education. It includes funding for schools to operate in 2016-2017 and provide them with the appropriations they need through the end of the year. The second bill, HB 6585 includes funding for critical human services and for colleges and universities. Additionally, it contains \$180 million in funding for the Department of Human Services, Department of Aging, and for the Department of Public health.