

# Pritzker Says Illinois Spending Cuts Happening Behind the Scenes

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SPRINGFIELD – Gov. J.B. Pritzker said reductions in state spending are happening behind the scenes.

He didn't provide any specific examples. He also said he needs the legislature to reconvene in order to make real reductions in the state's spending.

Asked on Tuesday why his office has yet to announce any reductions to state spending, Pritzker said he's fighting two budget battles at once.

"One is the highly-unusual emergency that has occurred in the year 2020 and that's COVID-19," he said. "There is the other aspect that I have been working on since I took office and that is the long-term structural deficit that's been in place for decades now and I came into office and identified it, I've held it up, and we've been addressing it since day 1. We're continuing to look at the ways that we can cut government. I don't want to cut services. I want to cut the cost of government for people ... You may think that that hasn't already occurred, that we haven't already make cuts, but actually we are doing it within the agencies even now."

He declined to name any specific reductions.

Pritzker said he needs Illinois lawmakers to reconvene in order to make any significant reductions to state spending.

The \$43 billion budget, Illinois' highest-spending in its history, was enacted by the Legislature in May that is held together by assumptions of billions of dollars in untethered federal aid and borrowing. Pritzker's office is able to unilaterally reduce expenditures not protected by other laws or court orders.

The governor's refusal to make any significant reductions to spending appears to be an anomaly among state governors, all of whose budgets have been crippled in-part by their own executive orders aimed at slowing the spread of COVID-19.

In New York, Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo authorized a reduction in spending by \$10 billion.

New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy announced \$1.25 billion in spending reductions for the coming budget, with additional reductions already in place during the current fiscal year.

Connecticut Gov. Ned Lamont expects to reduce state spending by 10% in their next biennial budget.

Washington Gov. Jay Inslee instituted furloughs for most state employees and canceled a 3% scheduled raise for the state's highest-paid employees.

Colorado Gov. Jared Polis signed a budget that reduced spending by \$3 billion.

Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan proposed nearly \$1.5 billion in spending reductions, citing their revenue reductions.

Wisconsin Democratic Gov. Tony Evers has ordered more than \$300 million in spending reduction since the pandemic began.

In May, California Gov. Gavin Newsom laid out more than \$14 billion in spending cuts that included a reduction in state workers' salaries.

Wyoming Gov. Mark Gordon has proposed a 10% reduction in state spending, calling it the first of a number of cuts. In total, the state could reduce spending by 30%.

After reducing state spending by more than \$1 billion, Florida Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis ordered his agencies to identify at least 8.5% in additional cuts to the current budget.