



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF ILLINOIS

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TO: THE EDITOR

This legislative session, a bipartisan bill was passed and signed by Governor Rauner restoring civics education as a high school graduation requirement in Illinois, a hard fought victory for the League of Women Voters of Illinois and our partners. This legislation fulfills the goal of helping young people acquire and learn to use the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that will prepare them to be competent and responsible citizens throughout their lives. Are the current leaders of this state exemplifying competent and responsible citizenship?

Governor Rauner and the General Assembly were elected to govern, not to hold the most vulnerable in our state hostage to political ideology. Governing requires discussion and compromise in order to find solutions the legislature is willing to pass and the Governor is willing to sign. We implore state leaders to pass a budget now that includes sufficient revenue and no additional cuts, not when it works into a political time table.

The damage being done to our citizens due to a lack of a budget is life altering, if not life threatening. Voices for Illinois Children, a fellow member in the Responsible Budget Coalition, compiled a recent report laying out the devastating impact of the budget impasse on senior services, mental health provision, early intervention programs for children, after school programs, autism services, domestic violence shelters, oil and conservation work, and services to homeless families, to name a few. The domino effect of further delay on lost jobs and vital services only plunges our state further into economic turmoil.

It is time to get down to the work of governing. We are counting on you to show what civics in action looks like, Governor Rauner, Speaker Madigan, House Republican Leader Durkin, Senate President Cullerton, Senate Republican Leader Radogno and everyone in the General Assembly. What are you teaching our children?

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