

Calling Your Legislator

Several calls to your legislator's office just before a vote can be very persuasive!

Tips

1. You can reach your State Representative's office in Springfield through the Capitol switchboard at 217-782-2000. You can get their direct number at <http://www.ilga.gov>. You can find out who your legislators are at <http://www.elections.il.gov/DistrictLocator/SelectSearchType.aspx?NavLink=1>.
2. In most cases, your legislator will not be available. Try to speak with a legislative aide. If the aide is unavailable, leave a message.

Sample Script for Talking to a Legislative Aide

Opening.

Identify yourself by name and organization.

- “Hello, my name is _____. I am the executive director of _____ in the _____ district. I am also a member of the Responsible Budget Coalition. I would like to talk to a legislative aide for a few minutes about HB 174.”

Talking to a legislative aide...

- “Thank you for taking a few minutes to speak with me. I am calling to urge Rep. _____ to support HB 174. Our efforts to end homelessness and ensure all Illinoisans have safe affordable housing are being put at risk by devastating budget cuts.”
- Briefly describe one specific way your organization has been impacted by budget cuts. For example: “Last fall, we had to close our shelter that serves victims of domestic abuse and their children.”
- “The \$13 billion dollar budget shortfall next year means even more drastic cuts are coming, unless a solution is found. We need a real budget solution like HB174—a plan to raise the revenue Illinois needs to stop cuts, make the tax system fairer, and fully fund essential services like homeless prevention, emergency shelters, and supportive housing. Has Rep. _____ taken a position on HB 174?”
- “Can we provide additional information that will help Rep. _____ make a decision regarding this issue?”

Be sure to write down the email address of your legislator as well as the legislative aide. Email an HB 174 factsheet and FAQ to your legislator and the legislative aide.

- If the aide has a question you don't know the answer to, say, “I'll have to check on that, but I will get you the information you need.”
- Be sure to thank the legislative aide for taking the time to speak with you.

Leaving a Message with a Receptionist

- Identify yourself including name, organization, and member of the Responsible Budget Coalition.
- “I'm calling to urge Rep. _____ to support HB 174. Will you please ask Rep. _____ or her/his aide to give me a call back at _____. Will you please give me email addresses for Rep. _____ and his/her legislative aide so I can send them information about HB 174?”
- Send an email to your legislator and the legislative aid with the HB 174 fact sheet and FAQ attached. Make sure you communicate why the legislation is important to you and the work that you do. You can use the “Talking to a Legislative Aide” talking points as a guide.