

Dear Friend of the Illinois Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community,

Department of Human Services (DHS) funding for the Illinois School for the Deaf (ISD) may soon be eliminated, resulting in a required closure of the school. Many believe that closure of the School for the Deaf will have a dramatic negative impact on the community it serves and would represent a significant reduction of public support for a population included within the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

We must act now to send a powerful message to our elected officials and legislative leaders. There is now less than a month before the new fiscal year begins and these devastating cuts take effect. Here's what we need you to do:

Contact and urge our state lawmakers to step up and negotiate a comprehensive, responsible budget that protects our state's Deaf and Hard of Hearing community.

Recently, the Illinois Deaf and Hard of Hearing Commission (IDHHC) as well as residents of our state were made aware of a possible closure of the School. This announcement is part of the DHS plan to follow the budget passed by the legislature which is referred to as the "50 PERCENT BUDGET." This new budget only gives state agencies 50% of the funding necessary to continue providing services. This means agencies must make drastic cuts across the state to follow the new budget.

We've made it easy for you to take action. You can quickly find those who represent you in the Illinois General Assembly, through the online resources provided below:

For Senators, please link to <http://www.ilga.gov/senate/>

For Representatives, please link to <http://www.ilga.gov/house/>

Thoughtful, customized communications are more effective than form emails and petitions. Please take a moment to personalize your message by sharing how important the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community is to you.

Act now and urge your elected officials to protect the Illinois Deaf and Hard of Hearing community by passing a responsible state budget.

Many thanks for all that you do,

Nikki Montgomery, MPH
Executive Director
CAIRS

P.S. Please forward this action alert to others who may share your concerns.