

= = = = = o = = = = =

**ILLINOIS – May , 2011** – An Illinois House committee on Wednesday approved a human services budget for next year that even the committee chairman called "hideous." "We were given the absolutely breathtaking, stunning task to reduce the budget by \$1.2 billion," committee chairman Rep. Sara Feigenholtz, D-Chicago, said. "It was a hideous task."

[www.fundourfriends.com](http://www.fundourfriends.com), a resources web site gives a voice to residents across the state of Illinois to speak to policy makers. FundOurFriends are citizens, parents, persons with disabilities and Human Service Providers, direct support staff, next door neighbors, business colleagues, and people from all walks of life who have come together in support of persons with disabilities. Web manager, Bob Sandidge, says, "We are reaching out to people across the state to contact their Senators as these cuts will touch every community and person in Illinois. Our site is full of information and resources to make that easy to do."

The website provides resources such as a "Find Your Illinois Legislators" page. There are no officers, no annual dues, no hidden agendas. There is no intent to create a state wide organization or association. Site visitors are asked to sign a petition and provided an easy list of things they can do in 15 minutes or less during May. Everyone can speak out on behalf of persons with disabilities and to increase the awareness of the general community with respect to the vital work being done by Human Service Providers.

A sample email letter is provided on the site along with a 'Find Your Legislator' resource page. Visitors to [fundourfriends.com](http://fundourfriends.com) are encouraged to email family and friends with links to the website or to any of the songs and videos on the site.

Social media is also a resource within the site. Through Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, site visitors can share the plea to stop human services funding cuts. By following [@fundourfriends](https://twitter.com/fundourfriends) on Twitter, 'liking' the FundOurFriends Facebook Page or subscribing to their YouTube channel, voicing your concern for these cuts is made even easier.

We are sympathetic to the fact that the state of Illinois, it's Governor and policy makers are struggling with a multi-billion dollar deficit. We are dedicated to fairness of funding and stand against the annual practice of using people with developmental disabilities as pawns in the Illinois Budgetary Process. The site also offers suggested solutions for alternative budget cuts. Site visitors can review and share ideas such as using accurate revenue estimates, not providing a \$600 million accelerated tax break for big businesses, identifying revenues within statutory transfers, and more.

**Our Focus is on Agencies Working With Disabilities, Autism, and Mental Illness**

[www.fundourfriends.com](http://www.fundourfriends.com) is offering fact sourced materials to educate the Illinois state population about the possible effects of those cuts if enacted. The site offers visitors actionable solutions to communicate their thoughts and ideas to their legislators. Please consider this website as a resource for your efforts to support people with disabilities.

#####

**For more information, press only:**

Robert Sandidge, [Robert@FundOurFriends.com](mailto:Robert@FundOurFriends.com)

Peter Gault, [Peter@FundOurFriends.com](mailto:Peter@FundOurFriends.com)

**For more information on FundOurFriends:**

<http://www.fundourfriends.com>

<http://www.twitter.com/fundourfriends>

<http://www.youtube.com/fundourfriends>

<http://www.facebook.com/fundourfriends>