1. Fiscal Year 2016 (FY16) Budget Update

May 31st typically marks the end of the Spring Legislative Session in Illinois. Usually, Illinois’ House, Senate and Governor pass a state budget for the next fiscal year and any substantive changes that will go into effect at the beginning of the new fiscal year would be implemented beginning on July 1. This timeline gives those who do business with the State of Illinois, including health and human service providers, enough time to plan their organizational budgets for the next fiscal year.

This May 31st, however, came and went without a final version of a FY16 budget.

The Illinois House and Senate last week did pass budgets for state agencies — but without a single Republican vote in favor and a $3-$4 billion hole between the appropriations in these budgets and the projected state’s revenues for FY16. It’s important to understand that while the Democrats’ budget bills funded health and human services at higher levels than the Governor’s proposed FY16 budget, they still contain cuts when compared to FY15 levels. The health and human service budgets within the House and Senate Democrats’ budget bills are contained in two bills - HB4165 and SB2037.

Also, keep in mind that while Governor Rauner introduced a budget proposal for FY16 in late February, neither he nor the Republicans proposed actual bills to try to pass his budget proposal before the scheduled end of the Spring Legislative Session. In addition, as of May 31st, Governor Bruce Rauner promised to veto the Democrats’ budget bills (including HB4165 and SB2037).

Governor Rauner had been conducting private, closed-door working groups, looking to leverage the state budget to get his “Turnaround Agenda” of substantive changes passed in exchange for revenues and a manageable fiscal year 2016 budget. House Speaker Mike Madigan and Senate President John Cullerton have, thus far, refused to give in, and it appears that legislators are back to the drawing board. The Governor has promised an aggressive public relations campaign over the summer targeted at the Democratic majority in the state legislature and an extended summer session. The lack of a final FY16 budget for health and human service providers, as well as other organizations who have contracts with the state, means uncertainty and unpredictability as we inch closer to the start of the new fiscal year.

While much remains up in the air, what is certain today is the same as when the governor proposed his draconian budget in February: Illinois needs revenue to support the essential services that Illinois families and communities rely on. EverThrive Illinois, a coalition member of the Responsible Budget Coalition (RBC), has been and will continue to advocate for fair and adequate revenue to fund a robust network of health and human services in Illinois that meets the needs of all Illinoisans.

When it comes to health and human services, the budget passed by the House and Senate Democrats contains $134 million in cuts/savings including 2.75% reductions to state employee payroll lines, 4% reduction to departmental operations and a 2.25% cut to most community grant lines. Again, it’s important to keep in mind that this is compared to the Governor’s proposed FY16 budget which cut health and human services by about $2 billion.

To highlight just a few priorities for EverThrive Illinois, the Democrats’ FY16 budget contains a 10% cut to the School Health Centers’ grant line, a 2.4% cut to the SIDS grant line, and a 20% cut to the screening
and education portion of the Illinois Breast and Cervical Cancer Program (IBCCP). The Democrats' budget fully funds Medicaid services proposed to be eliminated in the Governor's FY16 budget - mainly dental and podiatry services for adults and the carve-out of antipsychotics from the 4rx policy. However, the Democrats' budget does contain an across the board 2.25% cut to the reimbursement rates of most Medicaid service providers.

So while the Democrats' FY16 budget is an improvement over the governor’s original proposals and is their attempt at a balanced approach to budgeting when it comes to cuts and revenues, it is important to keep in mind that even the Democrats' FY16 budget represents a cut for most programs and services from the appropriations within the FY15 budget.

As Illinois moves into the summer months without certainty and clarity on where the fiscal year 2016 budget will land, EverThrive Illinois will work with legislators, community partners and public officials to reach a revenue solution that allows Illinois to fund all essential services and meet the needs of Illinois families and communities. Stay tuned for updates as the budget conversations continue through our eNewsletters. To sign up for EverThrive Illinois' eNewsletter, click here.

2. EverThrive Illinois FY16 Legislative Priorities
This session, EverThrive Illinois had a number of legislative priorities on its policy docket this session. We are excited to share that we were successful in securing the passage of many of these bills out of the Illinois General Assembly this session. We are also excited about the progress made on other legislative priorities we actively supported this session. Below is the status of our legislative priorities as well as links to find more information about each bill. Check back on our website later this summer for a full list of the bills we tracked and their status this legislative session.

EverThrive Illinois Leadership Policy Agenda
A. **SB1410** - Certificate of Religious Exemption (Senator John Mulroe and Representative Robyn Gabel)
SB1410 passed out of the Illinois House and Senate with bipartisan support and will next be sent to the Governor's desk to receive his signature and become state law. This bill creates a Certificate of Religious Exemption for parents/guardians that want to exempt their child from school required vaccines on religious grounds. To learn more about SB1410, click here.

B. **HB2812** - Explanation of Benefits (EOBs) in Medicaid Managed Care (Representative Christian Mitchell and Senator Daniel Biss)
HB2812 passed out of the Illinois House and Senate with bipartisan support and will next be sent to the Governor's desk to receive his signature and become state law. This bill ensures Medicaid Managed Care Entities (MCEs) do not send an Explanation of Benefits (EOB) for sensitive services (e.g. mental health services, substance abuse treatment services, reproductive health) in order to protect their members’ confidentiality and reduce barriers to accessing care. To learn more about HB2812, click here.

C. **HB2731** - Medicaid Managed Care Transparency Act (Representative Elizabeth Hernandez and Senator Heather Steans)
HB2731 passed out of the Illinois House and Senate with bipartisan support and will next be sent to the Governor's desk to receive his signature and become state law. This bill will take an important step toward strengthening the Medicaid system by improving transparency and ensuring all residents have access to the information they need to make the best decisions about their healthcare. To learn more about HB2731, click here.
D. **HR526 - Infant Mortality Awareness Month (Representative Robyn Gabel)**
HR526 was adopted by the Illinois House with bipartisan support. This resolution designates September 2015 as Infant Mortality Awareness month. To learn more about HR526, click [here](#).

**EverThrive Illinois Support Agenda**

A. **SB1847 - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Income Eligibility Increase (Senator Daniel Biss and Representative Robyn Gabel)**
SB1847 passed out of the Illinois House and Senate with bipartisan support and will next be sent to the Governor's desk to receive his signature and become state law. This bill increases Illinois' gross income limit for SNAP eligibility from 130% FPL (Federal Poverty Level) to 165% FPL impacting approximately 40,000 Illinois households. To learn more about SB1847, click [here](#).

B. **SB986 - Child Care Worker Vaccines (Senator Christine Radogno and Representative Robyn Gabel)**
SB986 passed out of the Illinois House and Senate with bipartisan support and will next be sent to the Governor's desk to receive his signature and become state law. This bill requires child care workers who care for children ages 6 and younger to have proof showing they've received the following vaccines: One dose of the Tdap vaccine and two doses of the MMR vaccine. If the child care worker does not have proof of the MMR vaccine, they must show proof of immunity to MMR. To learn more about this bill, click [here](#).

C. **SB1464 - Collaborative Practice for Dental Hygienists in Public Health Settings (Senator Donne Trotter)**
SB1464 did not move forward during the spring session, but discussions are expected to continue with Senate leadership and stakeholders at a future date. This bill would increase access to preventive oral health care, especially within the most underserved urban and rural Illinois communities. To learn more about SB1464, click [here](#).

D. **HB3761 - Crib Bumper Pad Ban (Representative Emily McAsey and Senator Julie Morrison)**
HB3761 passed out of the Illinois House but did not move out of the Illinois Senate and therefore did not move forward during the spring session. However, discussions are expected to continue with Senate leadership and stakeholders in preparation for the Fall Veto Session. This bill would ban the sale of crib bumper pads in Illinois because research has linked bumper pads to dozens of infant deaths. To learn more about this bill, click [here](#).

E. **HB2667/SB1584 - Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) Act (Representative Robyn Gabel and Senator Mattie Hunter)**
HB2667/SB1584 did not move forward during this spring session, but discussions are expected to continue as the state's legislative leaders and the Governor's office continue to work to craft a revenue package to fill the budget hole in the FY16 budget. This bill would be estimated to produce over $600 million in new revenue in the 1st year, and help to ensure the prosperity of all Illinoisans. To learn more about this bill, click [here](#).