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RESPONSIBLE BUDGET COALITION MEMBERS SHOW UNITY AT WRIGLEY FIELD

Cubs, Sox and Cards fans agree on one thing: We need a fully funded state budget!

CHICAGO – As the Chicago Cubs make baseball history with their first World Series appearance since 1945, members of the [Responsible Budget Coalition](#) held a unity demonstration on Monday at Wrigley Field, putting aside historic team rivalries to stand together, celebrate the Cubs' victory, and make a united call for a fully funded, yearlong state budget.

“My grandpa took me to my first baseball game at his team’s home park – Sportsman’s Park in St. Louis. My earliest baseball radio memories were of my mother and older brother listening to their team, the White Sox. Somehow, I’m a lifelong Cubs fan. I am delighted that our Cubs are in the World Series for the first time in my life, which I have spent waiting for them to get there,” said John Bouman, President of the Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law and chair of the RBC Executive Committee. “But when the Cubs reported to spring training back in 2015, I never would have believed that the Cubs would win the National League pennant before the State of Illinois had a fully funded, yearlong budget in place.

“‘Wait until next year!’ has been a rallying cry for disappointed Cubs fans for more than 70 years,” Bouman added. “Unfortunately, the people of Illinois can’t wait another year for our state leaders to do their jobs and enact a budget with adequate revenue to serve our people and empower our communities. These Cubs, White Sox, and Cardinals fans – like the folks in my own family tree -- are usually mortal baseball rivals. At least some of them have very mixed feelings about the Cubs’ historic accomplishment. But they all care deeply about Illinois and are united in calling on Governor Rauner and our legislators to find new revenue solutions and solve this unending budget crisis once and for all.”

The budget unity event brought together members of the Responsible Budget Coalition, a non-partisan group of 300-plus organizations statewide. The participants wore Cubs, White Sox, and Cardinals jerseys and t-shirts to show support for their favorite teams even as they stressed their unity in demanding a fully funded state budget that meets the needs of the people who live in Illinois.

A [study by the United Way of Illinois](#) found that the budget stalemate resulted in lost services for nearly a million people statewide. That means one million men, women, and children have been denied mental health services, substance abuse treatment, child care, senior care, HIV prevention, even food programs – and that number doesn’t include the thousands who have lost their jobs because long-established agencies have been forced to close their doors. One recent poll found that one in three Illinois households report being directly harmed by the budget impasse.

“It’s amazing. Some of the seniors served by our member organizations hadn’t even been born the last time the Cubs were in the World Series,” Bouman said. “It’s time for our state leadership to stop asking us to sacrifice while they try to play us off against each other. They need to step up to the plate and pass a budget that’s a home run for all of us.”

The Responsible Budget Coalition (RBC) is a large, diverse non-partisan coalition of more than 300 organizations unified in our support for adequate revenue to pay for vital state services and make smart investments. The Coalition includes organizations that serve children, families, veterans, seniors, immigrant and refugee families and people with disabilities; education groups concerned about early learning, K-12 and higher education; labor unions, and faith-based and civic groups.