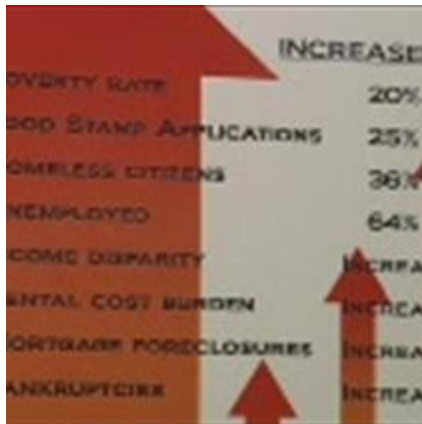


# Nonprofits Say Hands Off Rainy Day Funds

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A survey of nearly 200 nonprofit groups say the state is at a tipping point -- a higher than ever need for social services, but critical funding shortfalls due to budget cuts.

They want lawmakers to think twice about how the state's last emergency funds are used.

When adding up the budget cuts to health and human services, the side effects go on and on.

"Whether it's family violence or whether it's healthy start and child abuse, or the number of people living on the streets," said Susan Chandler, Phocused policy committee chair.

"We're hearing major cuts being made in the adult mental health arena, we're hearing major cuts being made at different levels, childcare, when you start to add it up collectively, it becomes a major major cut," said Phocused CEO, Alex Santiago.

And with the governor proposing to use rainy day funds to restore school on some furlough Fridays, nonprofits under an umbrella group called "Phocused" are saying hang on... that money isn't supposed to be used for that.

"That rainy day fund is explicitly set up to provide for the health and human services sector during a downturn after we had just gone thru a downturn in the late 1990s," said Santiago.

"This is what these funds are for, if this isn't a rainy day, I don't know when you think there's a rainy day. The rainy day has come," said Howard Garvel, Child & Family Services president.

Staff and private contracts of the departments of health and human services have suffered deep cuts as some of the state's largest departments, and they expect more could be ahead.

They want that money restored before it's too late in its impact on the community.

"We're very aware of the decreased revenues, it's the choice of where you're putting the monies you have," said Chandler.

"It is the responsibility of those in that room to find the revenue, find the resources, to care for the people and they have to make those priorities known," said Santiago.