Implementing an Effective Spending Cap

The spending cap has become a central issue in the current bipartisan budget negotiations. While a spending cap can be vital for preventing runaway spending, an overly restrictive cap would limit the strategic investments necessary for long-term prosperity. Unfortunately, proposed changes to the spending cap would have that effect, limiting the state’s ability to meet vital needs today or key priorities tomorrow.

- **Force** the state to choose between vital priorities by including state aid to distressed municipalities under the cap;
- **Hamstring** our ability to meet the changing needs of vulnerable populations and restrict the state’s capacity to respond to changes in federal policy;
- Incentivize legislators to **hide federal funds** in non-appropriated accounts, making the budget process less transparent;
- **Reduce** the effectiveness of state programs by including state money to implement federal programs under the cap; and
- Accelerate the **shrinking of the share of the budget devoted to children** by punishing the state for attempting to make up for previous mismanagement of pension liabilities.

If the General Assembly passes a budget with a three-fifths majority vote—a possibility if a compromise budget emerges from current negotiations—the spending cap would affect far more than our funding for two years, as it would likely have constitutional force. **We urge you to contact legislative leadership today** and call for a spending cap driven by a commitment to meeting vital needs, strengthening our cities and towns, and spurring equitable economic growth.

Read more about these proposed changes in our new policy brief at [ctvoices.org/spendingcap](http://ctvoices.org/spendingcap).