



For Immediate Release
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Statement by Terry Brooks, Executive Director of Kentucky Youth Advocates on the Legislature's Failure to Pass a State Budget

The national recession resulted in a perfect storm for legislators to make the case for needed tax reform: fallen revenues; increased demand; and common agreement that the state suffers from a structural imbalance. Instead politics trumped leadership at a critical moment for the Commonwealth. Policymakers have known since 2008 that we were in the middle of a significant economic downturn that would make crafting this budget extremely difficult. For two years, we have known that Kentucky's budget is neither adequate nor sustainable. After sixty days in Frankfort, nothing has changed and no budget decisions were made in what can only be described as a disappointing lack of leadership.

The upcoming special session presents a new opportunity for legislators to put the failed negotiations behind them. It is crucial that legislators adopt a balanced approach to Kentucky's economic problem, one that combines new revenue with carefully considered efficiencies. A balanced approach would ensure quality education, offer appropriate funding for needed public programs, and not exacerbate the already high unemployment levels. It's time to start fresh around a renewed commitment to create a responsible budget that meets the increased needs of Kentuckians today and sets us up to prosper when the good times return.

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