

Automatic federal cuts continue to hurt Ohio

Sequester hits Head Start, summer lunches, senior services, R&D

Across-the-board federal cuts known as the sequester will take \$184 million out of Ohio's budget in federal fiscal year 2013, which runs through September. These cuts mean furloughed defense workers, cuts to county funds for social services, reductions to public health programs for teens and seniors alike, and ongoing loss of Head Start slots for preschoolers, according to a new release by Policy Matters Ohio.

"The sequester will hurt many Ohioans, from kids losing educational opportunities to families of furloughed workers," said Wendy Patton, senior project director for Policy Matters Ohio. "We see new damage every month. Unless Congress makes changes, we will see these cuts deepen for the next nine years."

The losses outlined in this report, "Federal Sequester Keeps Hitting Ohio," will slow the Ohio economy and hurt the current and future well-being of Ohioans. Federal funds are an important component of the state budget. In the two-year budget under consideration in the Ohio General Assembly, \$44 billion (37 percent) comes from the federal government.

"Ohio's elected officials, both at the state and federal levels, should take steps to restore the important services being hit by the sequester," said Patton.

Research by the Economic Policy Institute on the sequester's impact on state budgets provided the data for the Ohio study. The sequester will force reductions of about \$5.1 billion to state budgets this year, according to the May report by EPI, "*What do current federal funding levels in the wake of sequestration mean for state budgets?*" (Available online at www.epi.org/publication/ib363-sequestration-and-state-budgets/.)

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Policy Matters Ohio is a nonprofit, nonpartisan state policy research institute with offices in Cleveland and Columbus.

Key findings

- Nutritional programs for families, children cut; AmeriCorps summer feeding program loses 135 slots.
- Senior transportation to medical appointments, grocery stores cut.
- Ohio's public universities set to lose nearly \$95 million.
- Up to 2,500 kids to be cut from Head Start in Ohio; 53 already dropped in Lorain County.
- Employee furloughs at defense centers start this month.