

Ala. governor declares proration on General Fund Budget

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MONTGOMERY, AL (WAFF) - Alabama Governor Robert Bentley declared 10.6 percent proration on the state's General Fund Budget for the rest of fiscal year 2012, which ends September 30th.

The General Fund supports state programs such as child development and protection, the corrections department, conservation efforts, economic development, public health and safety, mental health, Medicaid, legislative activities, and the court system. The proration declaration does not affect public school funding.



Governor Bentley declared proration on Alabama's General Fund Budget on Friday.

[\[Click here to see 2012 General Fund Budget \(PDF\)\]](#)

"We have pursued every possible option in order to avoid proration; however, this step must be taken." State Finance Director Dr. Marquita Davis said. "While proration is difficult, it is necessary to balance the budget, which is constitutionally required in Alabama."

The proration declaration is under fire from the Senate Minority Leader. Senator Roger Bedford said he does not support the budget cutting move.

"Governor Bentley and the Republican supermajority have not worked to develop solutions to increase revenue or solve the state's budget woes," said Bedford. "As a result, the people of Alabama will suffer."

Under proration, state agencies that are financed by the General Fund must reduce expenses through the current fiscal year.

"Just as families must reduce their spending when money is limited, government must also reduce its spending," Governor Bentley said. "We must live within our means, and we will make financial decisions that honor our commitment to taxpayers to keep a balanced budget."

Many departments, such as the Corrections Department, say they have not had time to evaluate the cuts.

The State Health Department says the proration declaration amounts to almost \$6 million dollars in cuts. "It's a little too early to know exactly how we're going to deal with the cuts," said Dr. Don Williamson, State Health Officer.

"We developed a contingency plan on how to deal with a 25% cut in anticipation of the 2013 budget," said Williamson. "We'll have to start looking at some of that early."

The cuts the Governor announced come on top of a 30% cut to the State Department of Environmental Management last year.

"We're going to be challenged about how to provide the necessary services within the funds that are available," said Lance LeFleur, ADEM Director. "We're going to have to try to scramble around to find out what to cut."

The Department of Mental Health will meet Monday to talk about their options.

"We just have to wait and see and look and see where we can cut," said Department Spokesman Tony Thompson.

The Governor's office said the state's General Fund has been impacted by several major factors