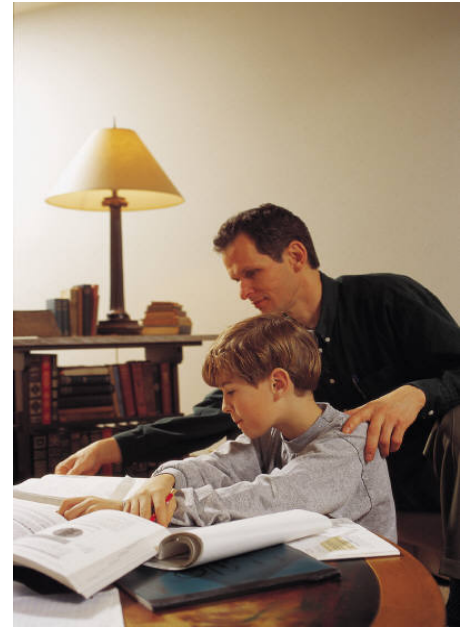


Bricks + Mortar = Mortarboards:
Illinois Families Need a Capital Plan

It's been nine years since state policymakers approved a capital plan for Illinois to support critical public construction and repair projects. The evidence can be seen everywhere, in schools and on roads throughout our state:

- **Children struggle to learn** in crowded, outdated and unsafe school environments – and in too many trailers that were meant as “temporary” solutions.
- **Parents are stuck in traffic** congestion and away from their children, whom they could be helping with homework and sharing other quality time.
- **Families suffer from unemployment** or underemployment, without the work opportunities supported by major public building projects.

Illinoisans need their state leaders to approve a construction plan that's based on solid, fair and reliable revenues – one that fulfills the many, growing capital needs of our state:



Education – *Kids can't be expected to succeed in dilapidated or cramped classrooms.*

- Elementary and high schools reported \$8.2 billion worth of capital needs – more than 13,100 construction and repair projects – in a 2006 Illinois State Board of Education survey that drew responses from 450 of the state's 873 school districts.
- Safety concerns such as fire protection and roof replacement comprised nearly \$3 billion of these needs.
- An additional 819 preschool and 818 Kindergarten classrooms are desperately needed statewide. These figures only reflect the needs of school-based programs

that responded to ISBE's 2006 survey; actual early childhood needs are much higher, and include other school systems and community-based providers.

- Overcrowded schools squeezed students into 724 trailers and other “temporary classrooms” in 2006.

Transportation – *Crumbling roads and bridges are unsafe for families' driving and unfit to support commerce. Traffic congestion cuts into the time commuting parents can spend with their children and it increases air pollution that's harmful to kids and families.*



- Illinois' shaky mass-transit systems require long-overdue upgrades to ensure safety and efficiency for riders.
- Three-quarters of our state highways date back to at least the Lyndon Johnson administration, and are nearing the end of their original design life.

- More than 700 Illinois bridges are rated poorly by experts and are in need of repairs.

Job creation and economic development— *A capital program of \$25 billion could support an estimated 700,000 jobs, according to Illinois Works. Such a plan would not only put more people to work, but help them get there.*

Illinois needs a capital program – as well as adequate, reliable and fairly raised revenues to support it. *Having a good state plan in place is critical to drawing-down significant federal funding for capital projects. While the total cost of capital plans discussed even broadly by state leaders varies from \$18 billion to \$35 billion, one thing is clear: Whatever the price tag, we must back it up with solid funding. Voices for Illinois Children favors some revenue sources more than others:*

- **The best option** is to make capital plans part of overall, revenue-reform package that hinges on a state income tax increase, much as SB2288 envisions. This revenue source would be optimal for a number of reasons, including the fact that it reflects taxpayers' ability to pay – and additional tax-relief provisions could ensure even more fairness for low-income households.
- **Among the worst** possible options is expansion of state-sponsored gambling. Studies demonstrate that gambling is not as fair, adequate and reliable a source of revenue as our state needs.

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