



'Storming the State House:' Alabama activists to rally for budget reform, tax increases

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Activists from across Alabama are "Storming the State House" on Wednesday morning and ask lawmakers to listen to their constituents and fully fund government services.

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The rally is set for 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. outside the State House at 11 S Union St. in Montgomery.

"We are looking for and demanding a progressive tax system that isn't heaped onto the backs of the poor," said Mike Walker, one of the event organizers, adding that higher income residents and businesses should be paying their fair share of taxes.

Wednesday's rally is the first step to creating a coalition between groups across the state in an effort to show lawmakers that the public is paying attention to the budget process and want reform.

The state's General Fund budget is facing a \$200 million shortfall if lawmakers don't raise taxes or come up with another solution before Oct. 1. If a solution isn't found in time, this shortfall is expected to lead to severe cuts to health care, law enforcement, mental health services and court systems.

Last week, the Alabama House of Representatives passed five bills to raise taxes by about \$107 million. The entire House Republican plan will cover \$180 million of the expected shortfall.

See related: **[Alabama House passes five tax increases totaling about \\$107 million](#)**

The bills have stalled in the Senate.

Members of Moral Montgomery, Montgomery Humanists, Planned Parenthood Southeast, Alabama Reproductive Rights Advocates and others are organizing Wednesday's grassroots event.

"Our supporters understand that what Alabamians need is more access to health care, not less," Planned Parenthood Southeast spokeswoman Catherine Smith said. "We are thrilled to provide our staff and supporters an opportunity to express their support for our work and to raise the collective voices of all who are participating."

Speakers will include:

- Wendell Butler, of Plumbers & Steamfitters Union Local 760 in Muscle Shoals
- Ron Crumpton, candidate for U.S. Senate
- Christopher Countryman, candidate for Alabama governor
- Jeni Tanner, of the Greater Birmingham National Organization for Women
- Terri Michal, of Moral Monday

For more information, visit the **"Storming the State House" Facebook page**.

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