

Lottery Winners Demand Their Money In Lawsuit Against State

by [aaroncynic](#) in [News](#) on Sep 10, 2015 10:45 am

👍 218

👍 Like

Share

15

🐦 Tweet



Photo credit: Scott Olsen/Getty Images

Two lottery winners have filed a class action suit against the State of Illinois for not paying out their winnings. [The Sun-Times reports](#) in addition to payouts to the plaintiffs, the suit seeks to stop the state from selling tickets with winnings over \$25,000 and a stop on payments to the lottery.

"How the heck can they do this, and they're still selling tickets?" Rhonda Rasche, one of the plaintiffs in the suit, [told the Chicago Tribune](#). "If I was the one selling raffle tickets and I didn't pay, I would be sued or in jail or both."

Rasche, who won \$50,000 on a \$3 scratch off ticket in July, is joined by Danny Chasteen, who won \$250,000 on a \$5 scratch off. "Why is it always the lower income people, the ones that don't have money that suffer whenever the state is having an issue?" said Chasteen's girlfriend, Susan Rick, who lamented the budget impasse and its effect on state services for low income people.

In August, [the Illinois State Lottery confirmed](#) it would stop making payments to winners taking in prizes of more than \$25,000 because the legislature must authorize the comptroller to cut the checks. Since then, it has still sold tickets with large payouts despite the lack of ability to pay. The lawsuit alleges that by doing this, the state is committing fraud.

Thomas Zimmerman Jr., Rasche's attorney, told the Tribune:

"The lottery represents that you can win instantly. They fail to tell you as of July 1 they're not going to pay. But yet they continue to sell the tickets under those false pretenses."

The lottery isn't the only entity within the state not getting funding due to the budget impasse despite court orders. Many human service providers have also gone unpaid for months. [According to the KFVS](#), the Senate moved forward legislation yesterday that would allow some \$1.8 billion in general revenue spending and an additional \$2 billion from other sources that would go to fund for services like Early Intervention, immunizations, autism treatment and cancer screenings.

As with other attempts by state democrats to get money moving to social services, the Rauner administration scoffed at the idea, instead pushing for its own package of reforms. "Rather than pursuing this failed Groundhog Day strategy of putting unbalanced budgets up for a vote every few weeks, we urge Senate Democrats to come back to the negotiating table to pursue compromise, reform and a balanced budget," said Richard Goldberg, Deputy Chief of Staff for Legislative Affairs in a letter to Senate members.

Rikeesha Phelon, a spokesperson for Senate President John Cullerton, fired back, [reports Captiol Fax](#), saying:

Rather than jumping at every opportunity to send snarky letters from the second floor to the third, the administration should consider holding legitimate budget meetings with the leaders to resolve fiscal issues. Cullerton will show up. Until then, pardon us while we try to advance solutions that meet basic human services responsibilities for the people of this state.

Contact the [author](#) of this article or email tips@chicagoist.com with further questions, comments or tips.