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Special Session to Put Off Budget Action

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Don't look for anything big to happen on Tuesday when state lawmakers go back into special session. [Gov. M. Jodi Rell](#) called them in to deal with the state's current \$467 million budget deficit, but don't expect a vote, Democratic leaders say.

House Democrats caucused on Monday afternoon at an off-site location, the [Lyceum Center](#), a few blocks from the Capitol. After their meeting, they said they have found about \$200 million in savings but that they have to run their plan by Senate Democrats before they can act on it.

They have called Rell's plan to eliminate the estimated \$467 million deficit as one that severely cuts the budgets of programs that help children and the poor.

Some Democrats said Monday the only way to come up with the dollars needed to balance the budget is to increase the income tax on Connecticut's wealthiest citizens. [Rep. Christopher Caruso](#), (D) of [Bridgeport](#), said the wealthy can afford to pay more. He also said there should be changes made in capital gains taxes.

Part of Rell's plan would cut \$1.1 million from the Smart Move Program, which keeps children away from substance abuse.

"It would mean that 4,800 at-risk youth would remain on our streets, tempted by all of the illegal temptations that our teenagers are faced with," Joseph Andreana, leader of the Connecticut Alliance of Boys and Girls Clubs, said.

Rell's office, in a statement released Monday afternoon, said the governor is proposing cuts to state government bureaucracy and is not making cuts to direct care. The bigger question, it says, is what alternative plans Democrats are putting forth to deal with the deficit except to raise taxes.

[Republican State Representative Craig Miner](#), of Litchfield, also said Monday said state residents are sick and tired of increased fees, increased taxes, and cuts to programs that, as he put it, are not being made in the light of day.

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