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Rally calls attention to state budget options aside from more cuts

Colorado lawmakers could offset some of the deep cuts to public services expected next year by eliminating some unfair tax giveaways for corporations, state residents said today at a rally at the state capitol.

About 200 residents turned out for the mid-day rally, sponsored by the Save our State Coalition, a group or nonprofit organizations including the Colorado Fiscal Policy Institute. The residents included Deb Newson of Greeley, who told the crowd about how her developmentally disabled son has suffered from lost services under previous rounds of state budget cuts.

“We understand that times are tough and that everyone must make do with less,”

Newson said. “Steven could make do with a little less, but these draconian cuts are not sustainable.”

The state’s budget shortfall for next year is projected at $1.5 billion. Cuts to public services will hurt everyone, but they’ll fall especially hard on children and Colorado families.

Many state residents are realizing, though, that additional cuts aren’t the only solution. They believe the government can offset some of the cuts by closing loopholes that give special tax breaks to corporations. They see a way to strike a better balance between cuts in critical services, like education and health care, and corporate giveaways.

Two of the options include eliminating a tax deduction that benefits many corporations that don’t even have operations or employees in the state, and reducing the deduction corporations can take on the salaries of their top-paid executives. Details are on the Colorado Fiscal Policy Institute’s Web site, www.cclponline.org/ccs/cfpi_tax_budget.php. These solutions are fair and necessary. They hold corporations accountable to the same standards as the rest of Coloradoans.

The institute is a research and advocacy agency focused on reforms to government spending policy to benefit residents with lower and moderate incomes. It’s a permanent project of the Colorado Center on Law and Policy.

Another speaker at the rally was Karin Mortimor, a teacher at a Denver school who detailed how poor funding hurts education. Closing the corporate tax loopholes would be just a start to adequately funding schools.

“Please find a better balance. Don’t rely on our kids alone to be the ones who have to sacrifice,” Mortimor said.