



## Human service workers protest gov

### Salary increases delayed

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BOSTON, Mass. (WWLP) - Human service workers protested outside Governor Deval Patrick's office Monday.

They say the administration has delayed 2 percent salary increases reserved for them in the 2013 state budget.

Earning on average \$12/hour, they say a little extra money could go a long way.

"A lot of the people I work with have to work two jobs to make ends meet," said Anne Sinawski, a direct care counselor. "Especially if I gotta go to the doctor, if I don't have, if I don't have that co-pay in my pocket, I can't go, so that gets very tough."

Because state tax revenues have come in lower than projected, Governor Patrick says a number of measures have been taken to prepare for potential budget cuts. But he says no final decisions on distributing funds from the state's salary reserve have been made.

"We haven't frozen any salary reserve," said Patrick. "We haven't made any final decisions yet. We're not going to make any final decisions until we see what the month end revenues are."

But advocates say 29,000 human service workers across the state haven't received the salary increase they were promised in time for the holidays. With \$1 billion in the state's rainy day fund, they say a modest salary increase shouldn't have to be delayed.

"We think this small amount of money, which is late to providing them with 2 percent, is a reasonable investment to some of the hardest working people in the Commonwealth," said Providers' Council President and CEO Michael Weekes.

If human service workers were to get a salary increase, it would be their first in five years.