President Ronald Reagan’s proposed budget cuts concern a number state legislators who worry about how they will administer the cuts and still conform to federal regulations. Legislators are afraid that Congress will not give them the freedom they need to administer the cutbacks.
Transcript

State Legislators Protest Reagan Budget Cuts

JANE PAULEY, anchor:

President Reagan’s proposed budget cuts have worried a number of state legislators. The problem, how to administer the cuts and still conform to Federal regulations. The legislators have been meeting in Washington as Susan Peterson reports.

SUSAN PETERSON, reporting:

These state legislators say that they don’t think that Congress will give them the freedom they need to administer the cutbacks. If Federal regulations and mandates aren’t removed, they say, the result could be disaster for some states, Manfred Ohrenstein, New York Legislator.

Sen. MANFRED OHRENSTEIN: In New York, I can tell you we are going to be confronted very fast with the possibility of raising taxes in order to supplant Federal money that we are gonna lose.

PETERSON: Example, education. Special programs now required by the Federal government could not be maintained while reducing overall funds. Example, Medicaid. Regulations currently require a full program of services, which gives the states no leeway to absorb the cuts. Republican Ross Doyen, Kansas State legislator.

Mr. ROSS DOYEN (Kansas State legislator): The thing that we’re concerned about is that we have the flexibility to make those adjustments within the program so that we can do what we think needs to be done in our state without causing any hardship to anyone.

PETERSON: Meeting with the legislators this morning, Budget Director David Stockman assured them that legislation to change some of those regulations will be on Capitol Hill by April 1st. The Administration will make sure, he says, that the states will get full flexibility.

Mr. DAVID STOCKMAN (Budget Director): We believe the block grant approach. Taking off the mandates, taking off the strings. Giving state and local units of government full flexibility to run programs
and allocate money is essential.

PETERSON: Despite such reassurances, the state legislators still doubt much of that legislation will get through Congress. But without it, the states say it would be impossible to handle all the cutbacks. Susan Peterson, NBC News, Washington.