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Charities warn of less money, more needs

By Bill Zlatos
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Money for human services will tighten as the demand for food, utilities and other basic needs mushrooms, a panel of nonprofit and governmental experts said today.

"Getting the necessary funds into the community will take longer," warned former Allegheny County Executive **Jim Roddey**. "In the meantime, we are likely to see in this community the demand for services for our most needy and most vulnerable explode."

Roddey spoke this afternoon during a panel discussion, "The Impact of the Current State of Affairs on Communities and Nonprofits in 2009," at the Senator John Heinz History Center in the Strip District. About 450 people attended the event.

Diana Bucco, president of The Forbes Funds, said a study of human service providers in Allegheny County shows a 73 percent increase in households seeking assistance for the first time in six months. Of those seeking help, one-third are not eligible for public assistance.

Bucco cited a 30 percent increase in requests for help with utility bills and an 11 percent increase in requests for food.

"We can't wait on the politicians to take the agenda," said **Kate Dewey**, a panelist and principal of Dewey & Kaye, a Downtown consulting firm. "We have to take the agenda to the politicians."

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