



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 6, 2009

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Coalition Representing Millions of Illinoisans Rallies Against Cuts to Community-Based Programs

More than 45 organizations from across the state urge passage of a budget that protects funding for human care services, restores tens of millions in cuts by Quinn

(Springfield, IL) A coalition of more than 45 organizations from across the state representing millions of Illinoisans are urging the General Assembly and Governor Quinn to work together to pass a responsible budget that fully funds Illinois' human care services infrastructure. Sponsors of the **Rally for the Common Good** say that protecting public health and public safety and putting the state's economy back on track depend on lawmakers' willingness to fully fund community-based programs across the state and restore tens of millions in cuts proposed by Governor Quinn as part of his plan to close the state's budget deficit.

"We all want a strong and prosperous future, and we understand that just as we need well-maintained roads, bridges and schools, the state relies on a strong infrastructure of community-based programs to protect public health and public safety, move people from joblessness to work, and ensure children succeed," said Jack Kaplan, director of public policy and advocacy of the United Way of Illinois.

Advocates argue that investing in community-based programs now helps prevent much more expensive public problems down the road. Based on a growing body of research, every dollar invested in community-based programs returns \$6 to \$8 to the taxpayers, significantly reducing the burden on our welfare system, health care system, schools, courts and prisons.

Many of the Governor's deepest proposed cuts directly target programs that protect children, including:

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- \$50 million to child care programs
- \$36 million to adoption and guardianship services
- \$13.5 million to after-school programs and parent training
- 12%, \$350,000 to children's mental health programs
- 14%, \$2 million to counseling services for foster children
- 10%, \$400,000 to homeless youth services
- 10%, \$500,000 to prenatal care for pregnant women
- 11%, \$490,000 to autism programs
- 10%, \$700,000 to services for teen parents
- 10%, \$302,000 to juvenile delinquency prevention
- \$1.8 million to miscellaneous youth services

"A child's success in the classroom depends on a lot of things that happen outside of the classroom," said Deb Strauss, president-elect of the Illinois Parent Teachers Association. "You can't expect children to do their homework if they don't have a home, or that home is tattered by domestic violence or abuse. These cuts put kids in jeopardy, and they are going to mean much bigger costs for taxpayers down the road, including very expensive special education costs for local school districts to someday fix the problems that the state is trying to sweep under the rug today."

Slumping economy increasing need for help, especially for seniors

Governor Quinn predicts that joblessness will reach 10% statewide in 2010, but 54 of Illinois' 102 counties have already seen their jobless rates meet or exceed that level. That, says advocates, is increasing the strain on the state's infrastructure of community-based programs, already weakened by billions of dollars in delayed payments to local service providers.

Nine hundred thousand Illinoisans turned to food banks last year, and one in six were seniors, according to the Illinois Food Bank Association. But church groups and other non-profits that run local food pantries from Rockford to Cairo say they have seen the number of families seeking help double. They warn that food pantries, homeless shelters and other state-backed programs designed to ease the economic fallout may not be able to meet the increased demand if the state doesn't provide significantly more funding.

"With a record number of people losing their jobs and their health care right along with it, they are forced to rely increasingly on community-based programs for basic necessities," said Nancy Nelson, manager of advocacy for AARP in Illinois. "Older adults feel the strain in greater proportion; they are more likely to lose their jobs and tend to already be struggling with soaring health care costs. Now is the time to invest in, not cut, these critical programs."

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Taxpayers save big by investing in preventative programs, research shows

Every dollar the public invests in:

- Child abuse prevention saves taxpayers \$7, primarily in health care, special education, and criminal justice costs.

Michigan Children's Trust Fund, FY '05 report, <http://tinyurl.com/c9b8at>

- Home care programs for seniors and the disabled save the taxpayers \$10.59 in nursing home costs.

Anderson Economic Group study of Michigan, 2006, <http://tinyurl.com/dkwd48>

- Drug treatment programs save taxpayers \$7 in criminal justice and health care costs.

University of Chicago study of California, 1994, <http://tinyurl.com/c8kcnf>

- Affordable housing returns \$5.45 to the taxpayers and generates an additional \$9.60 in economic growth.

Missouri Housing Development Commission, 2007, <http://tinyurl.com/cqtbtp>

- Job training programs generate \$4.60 in taxpayer benefits.

Suffolk County Department of Labor, 2008, <http://tinyurl.com/ca7aqp>

- High-quality early learning programs generate \$7.13 in taxpayer benefits.

Aurthur Reynolds, UW-Madison and Judy Temple, Northern Illinois University; study of the Chicago Child-Parent Center Program, 2003, <http://tinyurl.com/c3by5q>

“One in three Illinois families can’t find affordable housing, and we’ve long advocated for investing in affordable housing not just because it benefits individual families, but also because it benefits communities by creating good-paying jobs,” said Adam Gross of Business and Professional People for the Public Interest. “What’s clear from all of the available research is that when you help a family, you’re building stronger communities and a stronger state.”

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Rally for the Common Good Sponsors include (still growing):

AARP	Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Ada S. McKinley Community Services, Inc.	Illinois Coalition for Community Services
AIDS Foundation of Chicago	Illinois Maternal and Child Health Coalition
The Baby Fold	Illinois Partners for the Common Good
Bethel New Life	Illinois PIRG
Campaign for Better Health Care	Illinois PTA
Catholic Conference of Illinois	Illinois Public Health Association
Center for Economic Progress	Lutheran Advocacy-Illinois
Center for Tax and Budget Accountability	Lutheran Child and Family Services
Chicago Coalition for the Homeless	Lutheran Social Services of Illinois
Chicago Commons	Metropolitan Family Services
Chicago Jobs Council	Mosaic
Child Care Association of Illinois	Northern Illinois Food Bank
Children's Home + Aid	Prevention First
Christopher House	Project IRENE
Citizen Action	Protestants for the Common Good
Community Behavioral Healthcare Assoc. of Illinois	Safer Foundation
From Poverty to Opportunity Campaign	Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law
Grand Prairie Services	United Way of Illinois
Greater Chicago Food Depository	Voices for Illinois Children
Heartland Alliance for Human Needs & Human Rights	YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago
Housing Action Illinois	Young People's Project-Illinois
Illinois Association of Community Action Agencies	YWCA's Illinois

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