

AIDS Foundation

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AIDS Foundation of Chicago Applauds Governor for Fully Funding State HIV Programs

SPRINGFIELD, IL (August 3)—After months of uncertainty, Illinois Governor Pat Quinn announced his decision to provide near full funding for HIV services for the fiscal year that began July 1, 2009. The Quinn Administration restored 97.4 percent of the state's HIV budget.

“We are enormously grateful to Governor Quinn for ensuring that essential HIV/AIDS services continue, despite these difficult economic times,” said Mark Ishaug, President/CEO of the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC). “In the midst of a contentious budget crisis, the governor's decision to safeguard essential public health services is a sign of true leadership.”

“The governor's decision ensures that HIV prevention and care services for people living with and at risk for HIV will continue largely uninterrupted,” Ishaug said.

In mid-July, the legislature passed a budget that funded the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and other agencies at 50 percent of the previous year's funding levels. The legislature granted the governor discretion to allocate \$3.4 billion to restore a portion of these cuts. Gov. Quinn directed \$40 million to IDPH, an amount just \$6 million shy of full funding.

“Illinois will continue its commitment to public health thanks to the tremendous advocacy of IDPH Director Dr. Damon Arnold, our legislative allies, and thousands of committed community advocates,” said David Ernesto Munar, AFC Vice President. “We owe a debt of gratitude to the governor and everyone who championed restoration of the public health budget.”

While elated that HIV services will continue, AFC recognizes that the state's fiscal woes have yet to be fully resolved.

“Next year's budget deficit is expected to exceed \$10 billion. There won't be anything else to cut without shortchanging Illinois families,” said John Peller, AFC Director of Government Relations. “We pledge to lead the HIV/AIDS community in advocating for

long-term, sustainable solutions to the state's budget problem. At this point, lawmakers must entertain mechanisms to increase the state's tax base in ways that protect Illinois's most vulnerable, low-income residents."

AFC thanks legislators who led efforts to restore HIV funding. They include State Sen. Heather Steans (D-Chicago), State Rep. Sara Feigenholtz (D-Chicago), and State Rep. Greg Harris (D-Chicago), among others.

HIV Funding Overview

HIV Programs ("lump sum"): \$19,001,200 in FY09; reduced to \$18,431,200 in FY10. This budget line supports the AIDS Drug Assistance Program, which provides free HIV medications to low-income people who cannot otherwise obtain their lifesaving medications; housing and care for people with HIV; HIV prevention; and other services.

HIV in Correctional Facilities: \$2,000,000 in FY09; reduced to \$1,940,000 in FY10. This program successfully helps formerly incarcerated, HIV-positive individuals stabilize their lives and health, preventing new HIV transmissions and reducing recidivism.

Minority HIV/AIDS Prevention: \$3,150,000 in FY09 (no reduction in FY10). More than two of three people newly diagnosed with HIV in Illinois are people of color, including African Americans and Latinos. This budget line supported HIV prevention services in communities of color.

Governor's Office budget overview:

<http://www.illinois.gov/publicincludes/statehome/gov/documents/FY10%20Allocation%20Plan.pdf>

Department of Public Health funding breakdown:

<http://www.illinois.gov/budget/documents/budgets/482-DPH.pdf>

Founded by community activists and physicians in 1985, the AIDS Foundation of Chicago is a catalyst for local, national, and international action against HIV/AIDS.
aidschicago.org

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