

AIDS Foundation OF CHICAGO

411 South Wells Street Tel (312) 922-2322
Suite 300 Fax (312) 922-2916
Chicago, IL 60607 TDD (312) 922-2917

The African-American HIV/AIDS Response Fund, P.L. 94-0797

The African American HIV/AIDS Response Fund, championed by Rep. Constance Howard (D-Chicago) and Senator Kimberly A. Lightford (D-Maywood), provides a new source of funding for HIV/AIDS prevention and care programs in African-American communities. The bill amends the African-American HIV/AIDS Response Act (P.L. 94-0629), which Rep. Howard and Sen. Lightford passed in 2005. The legislation received a \$3 million appropriation for the 2006 state fiscal year, and was signed into law by Governor Rod Blagojevich on May 22, 2006.

The legislation creates a special fund in the state treasury for grants to:

- prevent and treat HIV/AIDS,
- create an HIV/AIDS service delivery system,
- administer the Act, and
- support other programs and activities consistent with the HIV/AIDS Response Act.

According to the bill, the purpose of the fund is to help communities create an “HIV/AIDS service delivery system that reduces the disparity of HIV infection and AIDS cases between African-Americans and other population groups in Illinois.”

Funds are intended to be used for the following purposes:

- Developing, implementing, and maintaining
 - a comprehensive, culturally-sensitive HIV prevention plan in communities where African-Americans are at high risk of the disease,
 - a stable HIV/AIDS service delivery infrastructure to help African-Americans, and
 - a statewide HIV/AIDS testing program;
- Conducting HIV/AIDS social and scientific research to improve prevention and treatment;
- Providing comprehensive technical assistance to African-American community-based organizations, and developing and maintaining infrastructure to help those organizations become less dependent on government funds;
- Creating and maintaining at least 17 “one-stop” HIV/AIDS facilities. Although the term is not defined, one-stop HIV/AIDS facilities are expected to include medical care, mental health services, substance abuse treatment, prevention programs, and other resources.

The legislation directs the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) to prioritize areas of the state with the “greatest geographic prevalence” of HIV/AIDS in the African-American community. IDPH must develop regulations detailing how it will administer the fund. Regulations developed for similar funds have included specific information about the types of organizations or projects that will be eligible for funding through the new program; how groups may apply for funding; how IDPH will invite or notify prospective grantees about funding availability; what accountability and transparency mechanisms IDPH will adhere to; coordination with existing programs and funding sources; and other policies the State will employ to ensure the intent of the law is achieved.

For more information on the HIV/AIDS Response Act, see http://www.aidschicago.org/pdf/2005/adv_2578AA_AIDS_factsheet.pdf. Please contact John Peller, Director of State Affairs, at (312) 922-2322 for more information.