

SUPPORT HOUSING ASSISTANCE FOR PEOPLE WITH HIV/AIDS

In 2005, Governor Rod Blagojevich signed into law landmark legislation, called the **Rental Housing Support Program**, which will provide long-term rent subsidies to 4,000 to 5,000 low-income households across Illinois. For homeless and near-homeless individuals, the program offers a vital opportunity to achieve independence, safety, and stability. As state and local officials work on plans to implement the program, **we must ensure that every effort is made to prioritize housing assistance for low-income disabled individuals—including people with HIV/AIDS.**

HOUSING IS HEALTHCARE

- **People with chronic medical illnesses are especially vulnerable to housing instability.** Many people with chronic illnesses are unable to work and receive disability income that is at or below the poverty level. For this population, even modest increases in rent, utilities, or other vital costs can cause enough instability to lead to homelessness.
- **Without a stable place to live, people with HIV risk serious health complications.** Housing instability can affect adherence to complex medication regimens, and can result in a dramatic and sudden deterioration in health, necessitating an over-reliance on emergency-room and inpatient care.
- **The nation's affordable housing crisis is fueling the HIV crisis.** Among homeless adults surveyed, as many as 69% were at risk for HIV infection from unprotected sex with multiple partners, injection drug use (IDU), sex with IDU partners, or exchanging unprotected sex for money or drugs.
- **People with HIV are disproportionately impacted by homelessness.** Nationally, one-third to one-half of people living with HIV/AIDS are believed to be homeless, incapable of affording their current housing, or at impending risk of homelessness. In metropolitan Chicago, the need for housing assistance continues to outpace available resources, leaving more than 5,000 individuals with HIV/AIDS homeless or at risk of homelessness each year.

DEAR GOV. BLAGOJEVICH & MAYOR DALEY:

Please prioritize rent subsidies for people with chronic medical illnesses, including people with HIV/AIDS, who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Housing is more cost effective than shelters, emergency rooms, or hospitalizations—and is essential to good health.

FULL NAME

ADDRESS

CITY / STATE / ZIP

EMAIL

Please mail completed petitions to AFC, 411 S. Wells Street, Suite 300, Chicago, IL 60607, or fax to 312-922-2916.