

# Legislative Report, 2012

The AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC) spearheaded or collaborated on the following bills during the 2012 Illinois General Assembly Veto session that will impact the lives of people living with or at risk of HIV/AIDS.

## HB 6253 – Medicaid Opportunity

*Rep. Sara Feigenholtz (D-Chicago) & Sen. Heather Steans (D-Chicago)*

Authorizes Illinois to take advantage of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) to provide healthcare under Medicaid to about 342,000 low-income Illinois citizens who are currently uninsured. The ACA offers generous federal matching funds for this newly eligible population: 100% for the first 3 years, then phased down to 90% by 2020.

Status: The bill has been assigned to the House Appropriations Human Services Committee, a hearing date has not yet been scheduled. AFC and partners will continue to aggressively educate legislators on the importance of this bill and the positive impact it will have on the lives of hundreds of thousands of Illinoisans across the state.

## HB 6240 – Debt Restructuring

*Rep. Esther Golar (D-Chicago)*

Under the debt restructuring plan, the state is authorized to issue general obligation bonds with a low interest rate for sale to the public. The money generated by selling these bonds will be used only to pay the state's past due bills. The State of Illinois has about \$4 billion in past due bills that are owed to its vendors.

Status: On Tuesday, December 4th the bill was assigned to the House Executive Committee. The sponsor did not call the bill for a vote in the committee, but plans to call the bill during the January special session. AFC will continue to educate lawmakers on the need for this bill.

## SB 641 – Anti-Bullying

*Sen. Heather Steans (D-Chicago) & Rep. Kelly Cassidy*



Current Illinois law requires that school districts have bullying prevention policies but does not provide the guidance necessary to ensure that these policies and their implementation successfully combat bullying. The bill clarifies current law by integrating the specific recommendations of the 2010 Illinois School Bullying Prevention Task Force – the Task Force determined that bullying policies that provide guidance to schools more effectively help them to prevent and address bullying.

Status: SB 641 was passed out of the Senate Executive Committee by a vote of 9-0-2 on December 4th. The bill now moves to the Senate floor for full consideration.

## Other Legislative Matters

### **FY 2013 Budgetary Language Errors Concerning Mental Health Funding and Homeless Services**

The FY 13 budget passed by the Legislature last June and signed by the Governor failed to include complete language permitting funding for supportive housing projects. A technical language “fix” is needed in order for supportive housing providers opening new projects during FY 13 (26 projects, totaling \$2,985,600) to receive the service funding they need.

Because of an inadvertent omission of the words “and mental health” in the Appropriations bill, DHS/DMH was not given adequate spending authority for payments to be made from the Health and Human Services Medicaid Trust Fund (Fund 365). While the appropriation amount for supportive housing that was included in the budget bill was correct, the language granting spending authority to DHS/DMH for appropriated funds was not. When the error was discovered, all parties (Governor’s office, involved legislators and DHS officials) agreed to address the error in the fall Veto session.

We understand that DHS is requesting supplemental appropriations because of other errors in the FY 13 Appropriation legislation passed last June and the technical fix for supportive housing will be included in that bill. This will be addressed during the lame duck session in January (January 3rd – 8th).

### **Governor’s \$56 Million Budget Veto Upheld**

Additionally, this week the Senate voted to reject Governor Quinn’s proposed budget cuts that will shut down several prisons and other state facilities. On Wednesday, the House elected not to call an override vote on the Governor’s proposed cuts, which Quinn called “a victory for the taxpayers of Illinois.” Quinn plans to appropriate this money for other government services.