

GENERAL ASSEMBLY



STATE OF ILLINOIS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 18, 2010

The Honorable Pat Quinn
Governor
State of Illinois
100 W. Randolph Street
Chicago IL 60601

Dear Governor Quinn:

We are sponsoring House Bill 6173, which would allocate \$44.06 million for HIV programs in the FY 11 state budget. We are writing to urge you to include this funding in your FY 11 introduced budget.

The HIV/AIDS epidemic is a public health emergency in Illinois and across America. We sincerely appreciate your actions to maintain HIV funding during the current extremely difficult budget year, including allocating supplemental funding to the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP).

We represent legislative districts with some of the highest rates of people living with AIDS in the state. As a result, the need for HIV services is extremely high, and the impact on our communities and constituents will be devastating if adequate funding is not allocated to maintain these programs.

In your FY 11 budget request, please include a state HIV funding increase of \$18 million, for a total state HIV/AIDS lump sum appropriation of \$44.06 million. We specifically recommend the following allocation:

- \$10.56 million in new funding to meet escalating enrollment in the Illinois AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP), which is an essential safety-net for HIV-positive people who have no other means to afford their lifesaving HIV therapies. ADAP should receive \$29.56 million in state funding in FY 11.
- \$7.4 million in new funding to restore HIV prevention, care and housing funds that were cut to sustain ADAP services in FY10. Grants for HIV services should receive \$14.5 million in state funding in FY 11.

In addition, we urge you to request funding at FY 09 levels for other HIV funding lines, including minority HIV/AIDS prevention (\$3.15 million) and HIV and corrections (\$2 million).

In FY 10, Illinois salvaged ADAP by cutting funding from other vital HIV state programs. Born out of short-term necessity, this tactic will only accelerate the state's HIV/AIDS crisis in the long term. This is why we strongly urge you to safeguard all vital HIV services from destabilizing budget reductions.

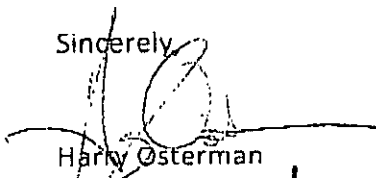
Services such as voluntary HIV and sexually transmitted disease testing, outreach and education, individual and group interventions for at-risk groups, consumer education about available HIV services, housing for people with HIV, and adherence and treatment education are vital components of the state's strategy to end HIV/AIDS. Depleting the supply of these services to safeguard ADAP is short-sighted and could actually result in higher numbers of people needing ADAP in the future.

Clearly, this will be a difficult budget year. However, the consequences of not funding HIV services will be severe. Without access to life-saving HIV medications, people with HIV may become so sick that they will qualify for Medicaid, which will pay for costly hospitalizations that could have been averted by maintaining access to HIV medications through ADAP.

We also pledge to advocate for emergency supplemental funding for ADAP and other HIV programs from the federal government. The growing number of people accessing ADAP is largely driven by the national unemployment emergency. The federal government should bear equal responsibility for meeting this rising demand that stems from national forces.

Thank you for your past support of HIV/AIDS programs. Now more than ever, people with and at-risk for HIV look to you—as a longtime ally and state leader—to safeguard vital health and human services for our state's most vulnerable residents.

Sincerely,



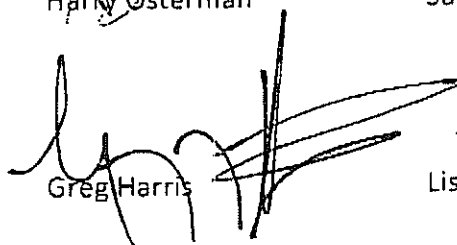
Harry Osterman



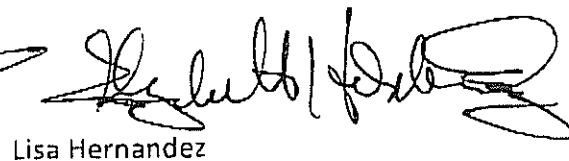
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