

SAMPLE CONSTITUENT LETTER – HIV FUNDING CUTS

The Honorable Representative OR Senator [NAME]

[ADDRESS]

[CITY] [STATE][ZIP-CODE]

[DATE]

RE: HIV Funding Cuts

Dear Representative OR Senator [NAME],

As a constituent in your district, I am deeply concerned to hear recently that Governor Pat Quinn and the General Assembly are considering cutting HIV programs by \$4 million or 14%, and I urge you to identify funding that will prevent these reductions.

A 14% cut in HIV services will lower by **50%** state funding for community-based prevention, housing, corrections, minority health, perinatal HIV, and harm reduction programs. Based on data obtained from the Illinois Department of Public Health and service use information, these reductions would result in the following:

- 108 additional people are likely to be infected with HIV, resulting in over \$40 million in lifetime medical costs;
- 563 highly vulnerable, low-income people with HIV will lose access to vital supportive services, and 114 highly vulnerable people with HIV will lose access to housing, potentially resulting in homelessness.
- 255 formerly incarcerated people with HIV will lose housing and supportive services that help them live stably in the community, and will return to prison or jail at a cost of \$5.6 million

Illinois can cut funding now, but it will cost the state later. Based on public health evidence of average HIV treatment costs and anticipated HIV infections that result from those with undiagnosed HIV infection, the proposed \$4 million reduction will increase costs to Illinois by \$6.9 million in FY 13 because more people will need HIV treatment, and others will be re-incarcerated after re-entry programs are de-funded.

Surely, even in a recession, the General Assembly will not turn its back on services for a people with a chronic, communicable disease. Will you support restoring \$4 million in HIV funding?

Sincerely,

[NAME], Constituent

