

Protect Critical Health Services for People with HIV!

Dear member of the Illinois General Assembly,

As a constituent of your district, I am deeply concerned that Governor Pat Quinn and the General Assembly are considering cutting HIV programs by \$4 million and Medicaid by \$2 billion. I urge you to identify funding that will prevent these devastating reductions.

A \$4 million cut in HIV services will result in a 50% state funding slash to 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 cause **108 additional people infected with HIV, including 38 infants, resulting in over \$40 million in lifetime medical costs.** In addition, we estimate that **255 formerly incarcerated people with HIV will return to prison or jail at a cost of \$5.6 million to the state** because they will lose housing and supportive services that help them live stably in the community.

Cutting funds now will cost Illinois later. The AIDS Foundation of Chicago estimates that **the proposed \$4 million reduction will increase costs to Illinois by \$6.9 million in FY 13 alone** because more people will need HIV treatment, and others will be re-incarcerated after re-entry programs are de-funded.

Gov. Pat Quinn has also released a litany of proposed Medicaid service cuts totaling \$2 billion in cuts to eligibility levels, benefits, and payment rates to providers. Many of these cuts will make people sicker, drive up health care cost over time, and make it more difficult for people with HIV to access medical treatment.

The Illinois Medicaid program provides life-saving health coverage to nearly 2.7 million low-income children, parents, seniors, and people with disabilities, including nearly 13,000 people living with HIV/AIDS. Some of the governor's proposed cuts and/or benefits changes include eliminating the Illinois Cares Rx, requiring a co-pay from vulnerable populations utilizing federally qualified community health centers, and instituting procedures that will make it very difficult for people with HIV to access once-a-day combination pills that have vastly improved HIV treatment.

Will you stand with me and oppose cuts to HIV funding and Medicaid in this year's budget?

Please fill out the information below and return by May 25

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____ **Phone:** _____

Email: _____

Please return to AFC via e-mail (tscudieri@aidsschicago.org), fax (312)-922-2916, or mail to 200 W. Jackson, Suite 2200, Chicago, IL 60606.. For more information on proposed budget cuts, please contact Ramon Gardenhire, AFC's Director of Government Relations, at rgardenhire@aidsschicago.org.