

Support \$6 Million for Homeless Prevention in FY15

The **Homeless Prevention Program** provides one-time grants, primarily for rent and utility assistance, and supportive services that prevent and end homelessness.

Cuts Have Decimated this Highly Cost-Effective Program

Since 2000, the program has helped 101,830 Illinois households. The average grant in FY 2013 was \$1,048, and 88% of recipients reported they remained housed four months after getting the grant.

But state budget cutbacks have decimated the program, leaving just \$4 million available in FY 2014—far less than the \$11 million in funding available in FY 2008.

The deep cuts in the program were made at a time when the state benefited from \$71 million in federal Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program (HPRP) funds. Those funds were exhausted in early FY 2013, but the need has not lessened. It is time to restore state funding.

Additional funds will help at a time when unemployment remains high and wages are stagnant, but rents continue to increase. Homeless Prevention funds mean the difference between having stable housing and being on the streets.

Who gets assistance from the Homeless Prevention Program?

- In FY 2013, 60% of the 3,818 households served were families with children. Unemployment, health crises and family breakups are common causes for needing assistance.
- Recipients must be in immediate danger of eviction or foreclosure or currently homeless.
- Recipients must document a temporary economic crisis beyond their control, and must demonstrate an ability to meet their budget after the assistance has been granted.

What are the benefits of preventing homelessness?

- Stabilizes individuals and families in their existing homes.
- It is more cost effective than serving families in shelters, which can cost up to \$20,000 a year.
- Avoids the disruptions to the education of children often caused by homelessness.

State Funding for Homeless Services Helps Match Federal Funding

- More than \$100 million in federal funding comes to Illinois annually to address homelessness. Nonprofit organizations use state Homeless Prevention dollars as a match for these federal funds.

State Funding for Homeless Services Should Come from General Revenue Funds

- \$13.1 million is currently being diverted from the Illinois Affordable Housing Trust Fund to fund this and other homeless programs—\$3 million for Homeless Prevention. Trust Fund resources ideally should be used to create affordable housing units.

\$6 million in funding will prevent homelessness for more than 5,700 households.

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