

New Poverty and Unemployment Statistics Released

Illinois poverty statistics released last month by the U.S. Census Bureau paint a disturbing picture of increasing poverty as residents faced both a deep recession and a failing state revenue structure in 2008.

The Census Bureau's data reveals that 9.9 percent of Illinois families are living in poverty according to the newly-released 2008 statistics, compared to 8 percent in 2007. This nearly 2 percentage point increase in poverty levels is particularly troubling in light of a more than 3 percentage point increase in Illinois' unemployment rate from August 2008 to August 2009, according to recently released U.S. Bureau of Labor statistics.

These dramatic increases in poverty and unemployment illustrate that the need for human services in Illinois has never been greater than it is right now. "Illinois families need a state budget that generates enough new revenue to fund vital services and speed economic recovery while prioritizing tax fairness," said Maria Whelan, president of Illinois Action for Children.

The state is facing a \$12 billion dollar budget deficit in FY11, and significant revenue reform is desperately needed to ensure that the startling numbers released by the Census Bureau do not continue to rise in the months and years ahead.

Lobby Day in Springfield

The General Assembly will reconvene in Springfield on October 15th. Be there to hold them accountable!

Join Illinois Action For Children and the Responsible Budget Coalition as we speak up for new revenue and urge our elected leaders to exert true leadership and protect vital programs that affect children and families in Illinois.

Make your plans now to come to the state Capitol and rally with other concerned citizens. Please contact Maya Tillman at 773-697-6137 if you will be attending and let us know how many people you are bringing. We must send a loud and clear message to the General Assembly that they ***must put people over politics!***

Go to www.actforchildren.org to download flyers in English and Spanish!

**Free transportation is available on a first come, first serve basis. Reserve your space ASAP!

Register Now For Our Statewide Public Policy Caucus

Tuesday, October 13th is the last day to register for the October 21st Statewide Public Policy Caucus in Bloomington, IL!

Statewide Public Policy Caucus

Wednesday, October 21, 2009

10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

The Chateau · 1601 Jumer Drive · Bloomington, Illinois

Caucus Topics:

2009 Legislative Session Wrap-up

Priorities for FY2010 with Grace Hou, Assistant Secretary IDHS
Member Panel on Developing Legislative Leadership at the Local Level

Please RSVP to Maya Tillman at tillmanm@actforchildren.org by 10/9/09.

Let Your Voice Be Heard: Attend an ISBE Budget Hearing

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has recently announced the schedule for their FY 2011 budget hearings. Every year, ISBE holds budget hearings in various regions around the state as the legislature begins next years' budget process. The ISBE hearings give the public an opportunity to share their education priorities with the people responsible for developing the budget.

These budget hearings are critical to early childhood education. ISBE is responsible for the Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG), the funding source for Preschool for All. While Illinois Action For Children staff tries to be at every hearing, the reality is parent and provider attendance and testimony have the biggest impact. This years' hearings are of particular importance as last year, the General Assembly cut the ECBG funding by 10 percent.

We cannot risk another of cuts to programs that serve our most vulnerable children. We urge parents and providers to participate in the process by testifying at hearing to describe the importance for Preschool for All and the effect of the 10 percent funding cut. If

you would like to attend a hearing, please view the attachment for a list of times and locations. If you would like to testify, Illinois Action For Children can provide you with the tools you need to deliver effective testimony. Please see the attached flyer for hearing dates and times in your area and contact Samir Tanna at tannas@actforchildren.org if you are interested in testifying.



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