



February 4, 2009

Illinois State Senate President John Cullerton  
111 State House  
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Senate President Cullerton:

The Chicago Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP), a professional organization composed of more than 1,000 nonprofit organization development officers, fundraisers and fundraising advisors is contacting you to respectfully request your immediate attention to the following matters that are significantly impacting organizations in the Chicago area served by our membership:

1. Address the serious financial concerns of Illinois nonprofit organizations whose clients and service populations are suffering from interruption of vital medical services due to the State's failure to make scheduled Medicaid fund payments;
2. Immediately address the substantial delay of payment on grants and contracts already awarded to Illinois nonprofits through a competitive process, which address the needs of the residents of Illinois, and which are causing the organizations that meet those needs to cut back on services, especially in light of successive years of decreased amounts awarded.

Of the more than 12,000 nonprofit organizations operating within the State of Illinois<sup>1</sup>, nearly 68 percent of those organizations provide services to residents in the Chicago area. Funds for these organizations come through competitive grants, contracts, Medicaid payments, and from philanthropic sources. These nonprofit service organizations are extensively vetted to assure that the state's money is well used in the service of its residents. Many nonprofits rely on those funds in good faith, once committed, to meet payroll and other expenses necessary to the provision of those services. When months pass without payment, their ability to serve the public is jeopardized, and the state loses those services, the value of which it has already recognized by making awards to the providing organizations. In addition, failing to complete the grant agreements with these nonprofit organizations on schedule places the employment security of the approximately 300,000 individuals employed by these agencies<sup>2</sup> in significant jeopardy.

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<sup>1</sup> 2008, Illinois Donors Forum, "Illinois Nonprofit Economy Report," page 3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, page 2.

Chicago AFP members serve charitable organizations providing an array of services, including health care, education, social services, cultural, and environmental. Chicago AFP promotes the development and growth of professional fundraising executives who are committed to the preservation and advancement of philanthropy in our society and our nonprofit institutions.

We work at organizations of diverse sizes, but all are committed to serving the people of Illinois, a goal we hold in common with the General Assembly. We ask that you recognize the considerable strain placed on our organizations by the very significant delays in vendor payments, and do whatever can be done in order to meet the funds committed as soon as possible, thereby continuing the good faith between the State of Illinois and the many nonprofit organizations it has contracted with to further the goals of the state for its citizens.

This is an extremely exciting and challenging time in our State's history. It is a time for thoughtful leadership and rededication to the concept of ethical service to the people of the State of Illinois. The Chicago Chapter of the AFP is ready to provide information and assistance to Illinois elected officials regarding these and other matters impacting the nonprofit sector and its programs and valuable services to people in our State. If you would like additional information regarding this request or to speak with an AFP volunteer, please contact Pamela Williams, CAE, Executive Director, at (630) 416-1166, who will put you in contact with one of us for additional information.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Cynthia L. Schmidt, CFRE  
President, AFP Chicago  
Chief Development Officer & Marketing Director  
The Association House of Chicago



Alexander F. Pope  
President-Elect, AFP Chicago  
Executive Development Officer, Operations  
Advocate Charitable Foundation



Kathleen M. Monteleone, CFRE  
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