



Memo:

To: Governor Elect Pritzker, Lt. Governor Elect Stratton, Sol Flores and the Transition Team

From: Supportive Housing Providers Association & Corporation for Supportive Housing

This memo attempts to highlight issues related to homelessness, the lack of affordable housing and the overwhelming need for supportive housing to prevent and end homelessness in Illinois, where housing is a platform for services to generate better outcomes and better use public resources.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) is for individuals and/or families who need supportive services to access and maintain affordable housing, are experiencing or at risk of homelessness, are living with disabilities, and/or are experiencing or at risk of institutionalization. Supportive housing is a stabilizing force that can improve the lives of Illinoisans who face multiple challenges and complex issues such as debilitating medical illness, mental health recovery, substance use and other barriers to independence, wellness and economic sufficiency. Supportive housing has been recognized by SAMHSA, the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), and the Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking (CEP) as a best practice for improving housing stability, which in turn leads to better outcomes for mental health and substance use disorders. For some individuals, it can also reduce utilization of shelters and costly healthcare. Supportive Housing has been proven to be a cost saving alternative to unnecessary institutionalization and reduce costs to public safety programs by reducing use of emergency and other public services.

Issue:

[Thousands of Illinoisans](#) experience literal homelessness each year, figures that are formally reported to the federal government. At the same time we are learning more about those facing long-term housing instability as well as those who use public and private institutions because there is not sufficient supply of deeply affordable housing to which intensive services can be linked. To reflect this broader need of supportive housing among a range of populations the [Illinois Supportive Housing Working Group](#) report published in January 2017 by the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA), estimates that overall unmet need for supportive housing is over 23,000 units and reflects those homeless, at-risk of homelessness, and needing to leave costly institutional settings.

Finally, during the 2 ½ years of the state budget impasse and cuts of funding to permanent supportive providers forced providers to drastically reduce services, reduce staff capacity, close programs and even closed some agencies all together resulting in a loss of an estimated 2,800 units of supportive housing out of a capacity of nearly 18,000 units.

Recommendations for the FY20 Annual Budget:

- Increase total funding for the Supportive MI Housing and Supportive Housing Services line items from \$32.7 million to \$36.6 million to keep pace with new projects that will serve the most vulnerable Illinoisan, replace the 2,800 lost units, restore services, and increase capacity of programs currently serving over 16,000 individuals and families that were cut due to the budget impasse. Future increases will be coordinated with state housing commitments through IHDA and local jurisdictions like the City of Chicago.

- Restore the Homelessness Prevention Program from \$4.9 million to \$11 million in the FY20 budget. Program recipients were 88% less likely to become homeless after 3 months compared to those that did not receive a prevention grant. Support legislative efforts also to amend the Homeless Prevention Program that will provide greater flexibility into eligibility and amount of support that reflects the research and evidence of effective prevention assistance needed.
- Investments in affordable housing are a proven catalyst for economic growth, job creation and generating tax revenue. In 2009, \$130 million for affordable housing was included in the Illinois' last major capital budget. This allocation helped thousands of families throughout the state by addressing the shortage of affordable housing, creating jobs, leveraging private investment and generating millions of dollars in local business income, wages and tax revenue. Funds dedicated to supportive housing saved taxpayer dollars by securing permanent homes for people with disabilities, the elderly and histories of homelessness in supportive housing instead of being relegated to shelters, nursing homes, or other institutions.

Program & Policy Recommendations:

- 1115 Behavioral Health Transformation Waiver ACIS (Assistance in Community Integration Services) Pilot - Planning has not started or included key advocates and systems who advocated for this service inclusion, with commencement to begin July 1, 2019. The ACIS should incorporate existing supportive housing providers that do not currently bill Medicaid in order to align other state funding streams for services.
- Office of the Governor – Dedicated Aide or Staff to inform and oversee interagency efforts to create supportive housing and ensure coordination on homelessness, healthcare, corrections, and child welfare. This would include oversight and recommitting to a State Interagency Council on Homelessness.
- Illinois Housing Development Authority – Reestablish a supportive housing set-aside or incentives in the Qualified Allocation Plan and develop a coordinated funding plan across agencies to allocate services, rental assistance, and capital to ensure vulnerable populations can access housing.
- Illinois Department of Human Services – There is significant opportunity to uplift and modernize the role and impact of this division to align with national priorities and leverage the state's 20 Continua of Care that draws \$109,000,000 annually with the ability to grow new programs and improve performance. The Division of Developmental Disabilities also has the need to modernize its business model toward supportive housing and reduce reliance on the group living model that incentivizes high staff hours coupled with regulations that has made services too expensive, which are offset by suppressing wages for those on the front lines.
- Illinois Department of Corrections – SB1607 passed in January 2018 requests that IDOC and IHDA work collaboratively to create a supportive housing initiative that will focus on highest-need inmates who have multiple encounters with corrections and other health/behavioral health services. There is an opportunity to explore replicate the Returning Home Ohio model https://www.csh.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/RHO_Pilot_FactSheet.pdf
- Department of Children and Family Services - In 2018 DCFS received technical assistance from Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) to adopt the Keeping Families Together model. Evaluated in New York, the KFT model reduced overall child welfare involvement evidenced through elimination of new abuse or neglect cases. Additionally, Average school attendance improved steadily among KFT's school-age children. https://d155kunxf1aozz.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/OneRoofKFT_8-Steps-Roadmap.pdf

Additional Links & Resources:

The National Governor's Association issued a joint brief with CSH: 2017 National Governors Association Center for Best Practices Policy Institute for Governors' Human Services Advisors:

https://classic.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/2018/EO/Products/NGA_CSHHousing%20Instability.pdf

Who We Are:

SHPA is a statewide (Illinois) coalition of non-profits providing supportive housing and services to extremely-low and low-income individuals and families experiencing homelessness, at risk of homelessness and/or persons with disabilities.

SHPA works to knit together it's members, including member organizations and member residents of supportive housing, into a strong state and federal advocacy voice for supportive housing resources and policies. We provide advocacy updates and connect supportive housing staff and residents to state and federal advocacy campaigns. We strive to build relationships with elected officials in order to create supportive housing champions within the legislature. SHPA strongly believes in advocacy from those with lived experience of homelessness and/or persons with disabilities who reside in supportive housing. The authenticity of their personal story weights more in the battle to ending homelessness.

SHPA's Mission:

- To increase supportive housing and services to meet the need;
- To increase the capacity of providers through advocacy, quality improvement, (by providing training & technical assistance), to create the best possible outcomes for supportive housing residents.
- Resident education and leadership development
- Identifying and implementing innovative practices
- Information hub and community organizer for our membership and those interested in supportive housing development.

CSH is a national non-profit that works with communities across the country to create supportive housing – affordable housing connected to health, human services and community supports – to help individuals and families thrive. We believe that supportive housing is essential to the health and well-being of individuals and families from all walks of life. We advance solutions that use housing as a platform for services to improve the lives of the most vulnerable people, maximize public resources, and build healthy communities. We've provided over \$750 million in loans, grants, project assistance and advocacy creating access to 200,000 homes for those who need housing and important services to achieve stability and transform their lives. We're worked in 48 states, over 300 communities, across three regions of the country, including a dedicated team working across Illinois.

For more information please contact either of the individuals listed below.

Respectfully submitted by;

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