

July 15, 2015

Dear Governor Rauner, Speaker Madigan, President Cullerton, Leader Durkin and Leader Radogno:

The 51 undersigned organizations have demonstrated their commitment to improving the economic climate of the state through public service to Illinois residents made possible via a combination of private, philanthropic and government resources. As employers, service providers and community leaders, we urge you to work together to generate the revenue necessary to adopt a fair, adequate and fully-funded budget for Fiscal Year 2016 as soon as possible.

Latinos are a vital, growing segment of the state's tax base, consumer market and workforce. Recent data indicates that Illinois Latinos pay more than \$3.2 billion in state and local taxes, wield more than \$47 billion in purchasing power, and own more than 70,000 businesses. Latino-owned businesses have sales and receipts that exceed \$10 billion and employ more than 75,000 people. While they contribute a tremendous amount to the Illinois economy, there are more than 430,000 Latinos living in poverty and thousands more who are low-income and struggling to survive. The state has a responsibility to foster wellness, stability and opportunities for these individuals to improve their earning potential and quality of life.

Access to the wide array of state services provided by nonprofit organizations is imperative for this community. The linguistic and culturally relevant approach to services provided by Latino-led nonprofit organizations is critical to the Illinois service delivery system, particularly for native Spanish speakers and immigrants. The employees of these entities serve as first responders to people in crisis, health care providers, educators, care-takers and stewards of upward economic mobility for children and adults alike.

Failure to adopt a fully-funded, comprehensive budget in the coming days will lead to the systematic dismantling of the state's Latino-led nonprofit infrastructure. Contract and payment uncertainty, impending cuts and ambiguity regarding the Rauner administration's intent to administer immigrant integration services is forcing Latino-led nonprofit organizations to impose furlough days and lay off staff. The aggregate effects of this disaster can be understood in the context of how several Latino-led nonprofit organizations are responding. Latino Organization of the Southwest has already laid off 12 employees. If a budget is not adopted by July 15, Erie Neighborhood House, Family Focus - Nuestra Familia and Healthcare Alternative Systems, Inc. will lay off 42 people and eliminate services for more than 2,600 people combined. Illinois economy is getting worse each day nonprofit professionals are laid off and the well-being and safety of their clients is compromised.

The budget impasse significantly affects other aspects of nonprofits' fiscal health as well. Those that have federal grants with matching funds requirements may not be able to retain those resources in the absence of the financial support expected from the state. It will also be difficult for agencies to meet the measures and objectives associated with philanthropic funds given the disruption of services and collapse of state support. The devastation is compounded by years of inadequate and inequitable investment from the state in Latino-led nonprofits while Latinos continue to serve as the largest growing segment of the state's population.

The opportunity cost of inaction is being borne by Latinos, immigrants and vulnerable residents in every corner of the state who rely on state-funded programs for support, employment and community stabilization. Illinois elected leadership can and must immediately do better. We strongly urge you to find the common ground necessary to adopt a budget funded with adequate, sustainable and progressive forms of revenue.

Sincerely,

List of signatories on the next page →

1. Alivio Medical Center
2. Aspira of Illinois
3. Association House of Chicago
4. Association of Latino/as Motivating Action (ALMA)
5. Brighton Park Neighborhood Council
6. Casa Central
7. Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago
8. Center for Changing Lives
9. Centro Autónomo
10. Centro de Información
11. Chicago Commons
12. Christopher House
13. Community Center Casa Esperanza
14. El Hogar Del Nino
15. El Valor
16. Enlace Chicago
17. Erie Neighborhood House
18. Family Focus – Nuestra Familia
19. Gads Hill Center
20. Hispanic Alliance for Career Enhancement (HACE)
21. Hispanic American Community Education and Services (HACES)
22. Healthcare Alternative Systems, Inc.
23. Illinois Association of Hispanic State Employees
24. Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
25. Instituto Del Progreso Latino
26. Interfaith Leadership Project
27. La Casa Norte
28. La Voz Latina
29. Latino Organization of the Southwest
30. Latino Policy Forum
31. Latino Resources
32. Latinos Progresando
33. Logan Square Neighborhood Association
34. LUCHA
35. LULAC of Illinois
36. MALDEF
37. Metropolitan Family Services
38. Mujeres Latinas en Acción
39. Northwest Side Housing Center (NWSHC)
40. Norwegian American Hospital
41. Onward Neighborhood House
42. Ounce of Prevention Fund
43. P.A.S.O.- West Suburban Action Project
44. San Jose Obrero Mission
45. Spanish Coalition for Housing
46. Spanish Community Center
47. Telpochcalli Community Education Project
48. The Puerto Rican Agenda
49. The Resurrection Project
50. Through A Child's Eyes
51. Youth Service Project