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Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law

Taking Action to End Poverty

PRESS RELEASE

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Governor's Budget Moves Illinois in Positive Direction

(CHICAGO)— Gov. Pat Quinn's budget address today ushered in a 10-week process that will determine the future course of our state. We applaud Gov. Quinn for his political courage in proposing an increase in the state income tax and raising the personal exemption to add fairness to the tax system.

Gov. Quinn has the challenge of balancing the state's budget in the face of unprecedented financial pressures brought on by a dismal state economy. Illinois' current revenue system needs reform: It creates a structural deficit, produces insufficient revenue to fund vital services and remains the most regressive in the country. The Governor's tax plan moves us in the right direction.

“The plan to make the Illinois tax system fairer is a long overdue boost to lower income working families that is even more important right now as they struggle through this economic crisis,” said John Bouman, Shriver Center president.

Within the specifics of Gov. Quinn's spending plan, he correctly proposed no cuts to all of the safe health care coverages. However, there may be additional work to do in the rest of the session on the specific programs affecting vulnerable populations, such as child care. In addition, there may be other measures Illinois can take to take advantage of funds from President Obama's economic recovery plan. By accessing those funds, Illinois could help vulnerable families while stimulating the economy.

Now it is up to the General Assembly to act responsibly, re-prioritize spending to avoid cuts and seize timely opportunities from President Obama's plan. The General Assembly must also follow the Governor's lead in enacting an adequate revenue plan to fund vital state services and move Illinois toward a fairer allocation of tax burden.

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The Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law, a national resource, champions law and policy promoting equal opportunity and support for low-income individuals, families, and communities so that they can escape poverty permanently.