

The message below is from Elizabeth Higgins and Kim Perez from the PRC. Everyone's voices and dedication to making this happen paid off!



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November 9, 2015

Dear Kim,

The voices of children, families, and providers regarding the devastating impact of Governor Rauner's July 1st decision to cut child care in Illinois have been heard. Today, the governor and lawmakers announced a deal to immediately restore access to affordable child care to all families at or below 162% of the federal poverty level and to eliminate additional barriers put in place earlier this year.

The deal made by lawmakers and the governor means that, effective immediately, a single mom of two children entering the work force can access child care assistance in Illinois if she makes less than 162% of the federal poverty level, or \$2,713 per month (roughly \$15.50 per hour 40 hours per week.)

In addition, Governor Rauner has agreed that once a budget passes, eligibility for the child care program will return to the pre-cut level of 185% of the federal poverty level. That means a single mom of two who earns up to 185% of the federal poverty level, or \$3,098 per month, will once again have access to child care assistance.

After five months of devastating cuts to child care, families and advocates are understandably wary of deals that might compromise Illinois' commitment to ensuring families can remain self-sufficient by working.

That's why, in addition to the changes announced today, Voices for Illinois Children believes it's still important for lawmakers to take stand by voting 'yes' on Senate Bill 570 — a move that gives lawmakers and their constituents a means to ensure all parties to this deal remain accountable. A bipartisan 'yes' vote on SB570, and its passage in the House, will provide the much-needed and lasting proof that access to quality, affordable child care is a priority in this state.

If the governor and lawmakers continue to operate in good faith, as they have throughout the negotiation, the deal will move forward as planned. If they do not,

the bill will be in a position to be placed on the governor's desk to eliminate the cuts for good.

Overall, the ability of governor and lawmakers to work alongside each other is encouraging in the context of the larger budget fight. Voices hopes this negotiation can serve as the framework for making further progress on the many issues impacting Illinois' children and families.

We look forward to working with the governor and lawmakers to pass a budget with the revenue needed to fully fund vital programs for children and families.

Thanks for your hard work, and we'll be in touch soon.

Emily Miller
Policy & Advocacy Director

UPCOMING EVENTS

Visit Voices' [Attend an Event](#) page for more information on the following events:

- **[Our Communities: Illinois Kids Count Conversations](#)**: This discussion series offers special opportunities to convene civic, business, and community leaders in a face-to-face discussion with local legislators on the best strategies to build better lives for local children and families. Join Voices in galvanizing leadership across the state by hosting an **Illinois Kids Count Conversation** in your community. Visit our [website](#) for more information.
- **Save the Date**: Mark your calendars for Voices' Kids Count Benefit dinner on June 2, 2016 at The Standard Club in Chicago. More details to follow!



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