

STRENGTHEN THE HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION PROGRAM

HB5564

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ISSUE

Each year, Illinois successfully assists thousands of families in avoiding homelessness. The Homelessness Prevention Program is a twenty-four-year-old program in Illinois. It provides a one-time grant for individuals and families and is estimated to save \$7,548 annually in state costs by keeping individuals and families housed and stable.*

Funds are used for rental and mortgage assistance, security deposits, arrearages, as well as utility assistance. Service providers also offer supportive services directly related to the prevention of homelessness.

Examples of individuals and families who may use the program include:

- ▶ Individuals experiencing layoffs and in between employment,
- ▶ People who have experienced an unexpected medical crisis,
- ▶ A grandparent who unexpectedly takes in their grandchildren.

Though the program has proven successful in keeping families stably housed providers would like to make the program stronger and ensure they are preventing homelessness and not just delaying it.

IMPEDIMENTS

Current policies restrict providers ability to ensure that families remain housed after receiving prevention assistance Providers are not able to provide comprehensive case management. Providers state that the current funding levels do not meet their case management needs. Providers are currently limited to using 15% of their funding for case management.

- ▶ Along with the housing assistance families may need further help. Without adequate case management funding providers struggle to meet, assess, and assist them with their overall needs.
- ▶ Applicants often need mental health assessments, job training, or child care assistance that would ensure their continued success in staying housed.

DID YOU

The Homeless Prevention Program saves Illinois \$7,548 annually by keeping individuals and families housed and stable.

KNOW?

SOLUTION

- ▶ To better assist individuals and families in need of housing assistance, permit providers to use 20% of their annual funding for case management and administrative costs.

**FOR MORE
INFORMATION**

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**The impact of homelessness prevention programs on homelessness William N. Evans, James X. Sullivan, Melanie Wallskog Science 12 Aug 2016: Vol. 353, Issue 6300, pp. 694-699 DOI: 10.1126/science.aag0833*