

1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Providing care and habilitative services to
3 individuals with developmental disabilities is a fundamental
4 responsibility of Illinois State government; and

5 WHEREAS, These vulnerable individuals depend on these
6 services to ensure their safety, meet their basic needs, and
7 help them develop to their fullest potential; and

8 WHEREAS, Illinois has a widespread network of
9 community-based agencies with which it contracts to provide
10 these residential and day treatment programs to thousands of
11 disabled individuals; and

12 WHEREAS, A critical variable in providing high quality
13 services is having a dedicated, stable, well-trained staff;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, Historically these agencies have not received
16 sufficient State funding to provide salary levels or benefits
17 that can attract and retain employees; and

18 WHEREAS, These low wages and inadequate benefits are
19 unfair to the employees who provide this vital service as
20 well as to the individuals they serve who suffer from the
21 high employee turnover and lack of continuity of care; and

22 WHEREAS, Over the past three years insurance costs for
23 these agencies, particularly employee health insurance costs,
24 have increased far faster than the rate of inflation; and

25 WHEREAS, These agencies did not receive any
26 cost-of-living increase in the previous two years, leaving
27 many low-wage workers without a wage increase during that
28 period; and

29 WHEREAS, In recognition of all of the above, the Illinois
30 General Assembly, by an overwhelming vote, included a 4%

1 cost-of-living increase for these agencies serving people
2 with developmental disabilities in the Illinois FY 04 budget;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, Governor Blagojevich signed that increase into
5 law; and

6 WHEREAS, The Office of Management and Budget has directed
7 all State agencies to hold back 2% of their funds in reserve;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, In response to this directive, the Department of
10 Human Services is withholding a portion of the appropriated
11 increase from the grants to these agencies; and

12 WHEREAS, Because of other actions taken by the Department
13 of Human Services, many of these agencies have thus far not
14 received any increase at all; and

15 WHEREAS, Based on information currently available, DHS is
16 planning to provide these agencies with an increase that will
17 average approximately 2%; and

18 WHEREAS, Because funding to these agencies is reimbursed
19 by the federal government at the rate of 50% through the
20 Medicaid program, the actual cost to the State to fund the
21 full 4% is less than the amount being withheld; therefore, be
22 it

23 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
24 NINETY-THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
25 we call upon the Governor's Office of Management and Budget
26 and the Department of Human Services to act to ensure that
27 agencies serving the developmentally disabled through
28 contracts with the State receive the full 4% cost-of-living
29 increase that was mandated by action of the General Assembly
30 for the purpose of enabling these agencies to increase direct
31 care wages, meet rising costs, and continue to meet the vital

1 needs of the individuals they serve.