

PROCLAMATION ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING MONTH

March 2011

WHEREAS, housing is a human right and owning and affording a home is part of the American Dream; and

WHEREAS, foreclosures continue to rise in Illinois. In 2010, there were 151,304 foreclosure filings in Illinois- a 52.08% increase compared to 2008.

WHEREAS, workers struggle to afford the rent. A full-time worker in Illinois must earn \$17.44 per hour in order to afford the cost of an average two-bedroom apartment (\$907) without paying more than 30% of income on housing.

WHEREAS, seniors, people with disabilities and others with limited incomes need affordable places to live. In Illinois, monthly Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments for an individual were \$674 in 2010. If SSI represents an individual's sole source of income, \$202 in monthly rent is affordable, while the average rent for a one-bedroom apartment is \$733.

WHEREAS, the supply of affordable rental housing is inadequate. For every 100 extremely low-income renter households, Illinois has only 53 existing affordable rental units. Sixty-three percent of extremely low income-renter households pay more than 50% of their income on housing.

WHEREAS, the number of people Illinois Homeless Service Providers have had to turn away has greatly increased within recent years. During FY10, Illinois agencies provided comprehensive shelter and transitional housing to 42,068 people but had to turn away 36,983 requests due to a lack of space. In Chicago, providers had to turn away 4,775 requests for services for homeless youth due to a lack of resources.

WHEREAS, there has been a significant increase in homeless school children in Illinois. More than 34,983 homeless Illinois students were identified in 2009 and many districts are still experiencing significant increases--as much as 20% in Chicago alone.

WHEREAS, lack of affordable housing exposes women and children to violence.

WHEREAS, fully accessible housing for people with disabilities is in short supply.

WHEREAS, many more people live in nursing homes and other institutions than necessary.

WHEREAS, the talents of grassroots organizations, non-profit housing professionals, financial institutions, elected officials, and government must be combined to address the immense challenge of ensuring that every person in Illinois has access to affordable housing.

THEREFORE, I, Patrick Quinn, Governor of the State of Illinois, do hereby proclaim the month of March 2011, as AFFORDABLE HOUSING MONTH in Illinois.