

April 26, 2016

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY FROM THE JUVENILE JUSTICE INITIATIVE FOR THE  
APPROPRIATIONS-HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE  
SCHEDULED FOR APRIL 27, 2016 IN CHICAGO, IL**

**ILLINOIS BUDGET POLICY STATEMENT**

The Illinois Juvenile Justice Initiative is a statewide non-profit advocacy organization, funded through independent (non-government) funds. The Juvenile Justice Initiative works to implement national research documenting that the most effective approach to reducing juvenile crime is a comprehensive continuum of community-based prevention and intervention programs, as opposed to incarceration.

The Juvenile Justice Initiative urges the Governor and Legislative Leaders to maintain state funding for critical prevention and intervention programs, including CCBYS (24/7 emergency services for children and youth in crisis), TeenReach (after school programming ensuring youth are productively involved during peak offending hours), and Redeploy Illinois (last-ditch community alternatives to incarceration). Equally critical are services for youth as they age out of the child welfare system, substance abuse services, mental health services, and services for homeless youth.

These programs are modestly funded – for example, Teen Reach, CCBYS and Redeploy total about \$30 million, while the state allocates over \$100 million for juvenile prisons. Redeploy Illinois has been evaluated annually and consistently proven to reduce incarceration with positive outcomes.

In short, the state can spend a modest amount of taxpayer money at the frontend preventing youth crime – or we will spend significantly more at the backend in youth incarceration. Please fully fund community based prevention and intervention services for children in Illinois.

Elizabeth Clarke, President  
Juvenile Justice Initiative