

May 22, 2007

Honorable Rod Blagojevich, Governor of Illinois
Honorable Emil Jones, President, Illinois Senate
Honorable Michael Madigan, Speaker, Illinois House of Representatives
Honorable Frank Watson, Minority Leader, Illinois Senate
Honorable Tom Cross, Minority Leaders, Illinois House of Representatives

To Our State Leaders:

More than 760,000 of our constituent families benefit greatly from the Illinois Earned Income Tax Credit, which helps low-income, working households to keep more of their hard-earned money at tax time each year. These are the people who need tax relief most, because they already pay more than their fair share under our state's regressive tax structure.

Unfortunately, ours is the smallest state EITC in the nation, set at only 5 percent of the federal EITC (and representing a maximum value of only \$220 per qualifying family). Doubling that value is the least we should do for working-poor households, as called for in SB12, which passed the Senate unanimously in February and has attracted the co-sponsorship of 100 House members.

Furthermore, if we increase revenues significantly this year, we should similarly increase the EITC by an even more significant amount. In that case, we should raise the state EITC to at least 20 percent of the federal credit in order to provide families with the relief they need now, as well as offsetting the effects of still higher taxes on their limited earnings.

We, the undersigned members of the General Assembly, urge your support in increasing the state EITC to an appropriate level for low-income, working households throughout Illinois.

Thank you --

