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Local community leaders meet in Des Plaines to discuss Governor Blagojevich's *Investing in Families* plan

Top Blagojevich official discusses how Governor's plan will address needs in communities statewide by investing in schools, providing access to affordable healthcare and improving the overall quality of life for Illinois residents

DES PLAINES – Community leaders, labor, education and social service representatives met tonight at a hearing hosted by the Community and Economic Development Association (CEDA) to hear from the Illinois State Board of Education Chairman Jesse H. Ruiz about how Governor Blagojevich's *Investing in Families* plan would improve the quality of life for middle-class and working families throughout Illinois by increasing the state's investment in education, providing property tax relief and giving every person in Illinois access to affordable health coverage. The Governor's plan accomplishes these goals by correcting the inequities of the state's tax system that has placed an increasing burden on individual taxpayers, while some of the largest corporations in Illinois pay little or no taxes.

Through the Governor's comprehensive plan, schools in Des Plaines and nearby communities would receive over \$30 million in new state support in FY08 as a result of his \$1.5 billion proposed investment in schools statewide. Additionally, healthcare providers in the region would receive an estimated \$11.5 million in new funding as a result of the Governor's *Illinois Covered* initiative that would increase access for the uninsured, and assist small businesses and individuals with the increasing costs of healthcare. Local residents and businesses would also benefit from \$1 billion in statewide property tax relief.

"Our schools have been chronically under funded for years. The time is now for the legislature to pass Governor Blagojevich's *Investing in Families* plan," said Illinois State Board of Education Chairman Jesse H. Ruiz. "There is no magic formula to improving our schools, but we know that if we give students better places to learn, good teachers and administrators and better materials, along with greater accountability, our students' learning will improve. *Helping Kids Learn* does just that, it gives our students the resources they need for success."

The Governor's *Investing in Families* plan proposes to improve the lives of residents statewide:

- *Helping Kids Learn* – a record new investment of \$10 billion in schools over the next four years – nearly three times bigger than any increase in state history;
- *Illinois Covered* – an affordable, reliable healthcare plan to cover the 1.4 million uninsured adults in Illinois and provide assistance to millions of middle-income families and small businesses struggling to keep up with health insurance costs;
- Statewide property tax relief to alleviate costs that have escalated as a result of the state neglecting its primary funding obligation; and,
- Investments in the state’s transportation infrastructure through a \$3 billion bonded capital road program.

“I want to thank CEDA for stepping forward to help convene the community around such important issues as education and healthcare. We are always looking for different ways to gain funding for various community health outreach efforts. I am truly looking forward to the community discussion around the Governor’s proposal because it has a concrete way to ensure that hospitals and schools can sustain the necessary funding,” said Ron Buch, Executive Director of Community Health and Outreach, Northwest Community Hospital.

Through the Governor’s *Investing in Families* plan, local school districts will benefit from a combination of substantial new education funding and property tax relief:

Arlington Heights School District 25:	\$2,492,377
Community Consolidated School District 59:	\$2,300,239
Des Plaines School District 62:	\$2,061,493
East Maine School District 63:	\$1,652,144
Maine Township High School District 207:	\$2,908,825
Mount Prospect School District 57:	\$ 877,644
Northbrook Elementary School District 27:	\$ 531,903
Northfield Township High School District 225:	\$1,983,560
Park Ridge School District 64:	\$2,043,813
Pennoyer School District 79:	\$ 161,344
Prospect Heights District 23:	\$ 747,057
River Trails School District 26:	\$ 789,473
Schaumburg School District 54:	\$6,960,825
Township High School District 214:	\$5,099,986
West Northfield School District 31:	\$ 323,138

Increased reimbursement rates and revenue growth from Illinois Covered would benefit Des Plaines area hospitals:

<u>Hospital</u>	<u>Community</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Lutheran General	Park Ridge	\$3,254,547
Northwest Community	Arlington Heights	\$3,060,065

Alexian Brothers	Elk Grove Village	\$3,453,042
Holy Family	Des Plaines	\$574,223
Maryville Scott Nolan	Des Plaines	\$13,459
Lake Forest Hospital	Lake Forest	\$1,223,430

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