

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

February 17, 2017

The Honorable Bruce Rauner  
Governor of Illinois  
207 State House  
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Governor Rauner,

For nearly three years, thousands of Illinoisans have been hurt by your refusal to compromise and agree to a real budget. It's hard to truly grasp the damage that has been done, but there is perhaps no clearer example of this failure than your administration's approach to funding domestic violence programs.

As was recently revealed in an *Associated Press* article, Secretary James Dimas failed to inform domestic violence programs across the state that they would, once again, be running out of state funding. To add insult to injury, Secretary Dimas waited until just two weeks before temporary funding expired to inform domestic violence programs about this failure. Asked why they would wait until the 11<sup>th</sup> hour, Secretary Dimas claimed it was just "some confusion."

Quite simply, that's not good enough.

The permanent damage caused by defunding domestic violence shelters and prevention programs cannot be understated.

In September 2015, *Remedies Renewing Lives* domestic violence shelter in Winnebago County was forced to turn away 118 desperate women and children at the door because they simply didn't have the state funding to help them in their hour of need.

In Kane County, after months of the State failing to provide its share of their funding stream, the *Mutual Ground* shelter has been forced to lay off four people, reducing their ability to serve the community – and that's after being unable to replace six other staffers who left last year.

At the *Center for Domestic Peace* in Chicago, which provides prevention counseling to past offenders, employees are taking pay cuts to make up for their lost funding - an unsustainable and damaging choice that will ultimately lead to fewer counselors staying in this line of work.

As federal officials, we have proudly supported legislation that provided record funding for domestic violence programs through the *Violence Against Women Act* - however it is long past time for the State to do its part.

Every day, three women die from domestic violence across our country. For thousands of women and children across our state, this truly is a matter of life or death. The time to act is now.

While we were disappointed that you did not raise this issue during your budget address on Wednesday, we are hopeful that you will reassess this situation with fresh eyes and do the right thing.

We strongly urge you to put partisanship and non-budgetary demands aside and finally agree to a budget that fully restores funding for domestic violence programs.

Sincerely,



Cheri Bustos  
Member of Congress



Bill Foster  
Member of Congress



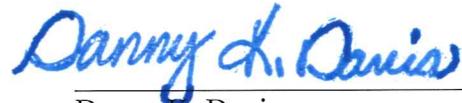
Raja Krishnamoorthi  
Member of Congress



Bobby L. Rush  
Member of Congress



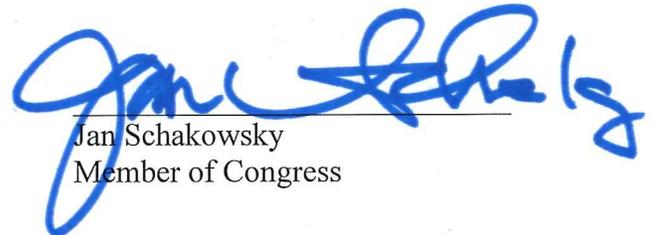
Bradley S. Schneider  
Member of Congress



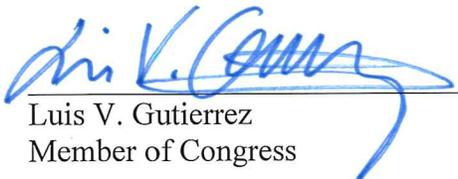
Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress



Mike Quigley  
Member of Congress



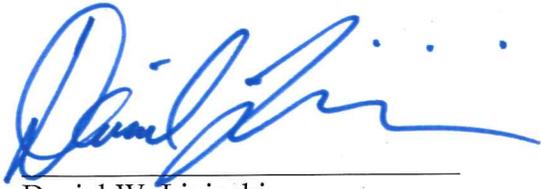
Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



Luis V. Gutierrez  
Member of Congress



Robin L. Kelly  
Member of Congress



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Daniel W. Lipinski  
Member of Congress

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