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Press Release

Pilsen Community Rejects Gov. Quinn's Proposed Cuts to Illinois Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

CHICAGO, IL. May 29, 2012 – On Thursday May 24 2012, community organizations from Pilsen held a press conference to oppose Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) cuts proposed by the state of Illinois. The Academy of Parents in Leadership, Chicago Commons (Guadalupano Family Center), Gads Hill Center, El Hogar del Niño, Pilsen Neighbors Community Council, El Valor and community residents convened at Plaza Tenochtitlán in Pilsen.

WHEN: Thursday, May 24, 2012

WHERE: Plaza Tenochtitlán (18th Street and Blue Island Avenue)

TIME: 10:30 am

BACKGROUND: Governor Quinn's budget proposes devastating programmatic cuts to the IDHS Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). Included in the cuts are:

1. Dramatic increases in the child care co-payment for all families, including a 350% increase for the lowest income families (\$36 million);
2. Lowering the income guideline to enter the CCAP from 185% of FPL (\$9 million)
3. A reduction to the rate paid to child care providers by eliminating parity-increases for center-based providers (\$28.5 million);
4. A cut in quality investments that better prepare children for success in school and life (\$3.4 million);
5. Program changes that minimize flexibility for families and are punitive to providers (\$7.5 million).

Families will also see their co-payments increase by an average of 52% and these increases would hit families with the lowest income the hardest.

According to Rebecca Estrada, Executive Director of El Hogar del Niño, “For children whose families are low-income, child care programs are often the only early childhood education services they receive... the proposed cuts will make it harder for our community and the entire state to get affordable child care.”

Susanna Olmos, parent leader at El Hogar del Niño says, “Cuts mean I will lose the stable child care arrangements needed so that I can keep working, and my children will lose their quality early childhood education programs.”

ABOUT PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS:

The Academy of Parents in Leadership (APL) is an education initiative of Pilsen Neighbors Community Council and Gamaliel of Metro Chicago. APL seeks to help parents become strong school leaders and advocates in education issues affecting them, their children and their community. www.pilsenneighbors.org/academyofparents

Chicago Commons' broad mission is to partner with individuals, families and communities to overcome poverty, discrimination and isolation. Throughout its 116-year history, Chicago Commons has helped organize neighborhood residents to advocate for changes to strengthen their neighborhoods. www.chicagocommons.org.

Gads Hill: In collaboration with our community and other organizations, Gads Hill Center offers programs that support and empower the economically and educationally disadvantaged residents of Chicago's Pilsen, Back of the Yards, Little Village, and North Lawndale neighborhoods. We put our mission into action through an array of services that are of high quality, flexible, responsive, and culturally sensitive. www.gadshillcenter.org.

El Hogar del Niño's mission is to provide and demonstrate comprehensive bilingual/bicultural early childhood development programs for infants, preschool, school-age children and their families. El Hogar seeks to meet the needs of the entire family so that children can develop in environments that are culturally, emotionally, psychologically, socially, and financially strong. www.elhogardelnino.org.

Pilsen Neighbors Community Council's mission is to work to establish policies and practices in Pilsen and Southwest Areas to bring about justice and equity by investing in the development of community leaders and pastors through leadership training and action. PNCC is a member of The Gamaliel Network, made up of grass-roots community organizations throughout the country. www.pilsenneighbors.org.

El Valor's mission is to support and challenge urban families to achieve excellence and participate fully in community life. Our programs exist to enrich and empower people with disabilities, the disenfranchised and the underserved. www.elvalor.org.