2018 Public Policy Agenda

United Way of Illinois’ public policy agenda reflects the work of United Ways across the state in the areas of education, income and health. Additionally, United Way advocates for sound policies affecting the non-profit sector’s capacity to advance the common good. United Way of Illinois has established engagement strategies within each of the following four areas:

**EDUCATION**

**LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR FUTURE SUCCESS**

Illinois’ competitiveness in a global economy depends upon academic achievement. To succeed, students must enter school ready to learn and navigate the transitions to high school, post-secondary study and work.

To ensure children receive a quality education and stay in school through graduation, United Way of Illinois will:

- Advocate to make high-quality, affordable early-learning opportunities available to all children
- Promote partnerships that support family engagement and community-based involvement to improve student academic achievement
- Support comprehensive and consistent assessment and measurement standards from Pre-K through high school graduation

**INCOME**

**FOSTERING STRONG COMMUNITIES THROUGH FINANCIAL STABILITY**

Financial stability has taken on greater importance for many Illinoisans as our economy rebounds. Households that are financially stable and have sufficient income to support their families create a stronger community and economy.

To ensure families and individuals have the resources they need to achieve financial stability, United Way of Illinois will:

- Support increased access to work support programs and streamlined processes for critical benefits
- Promote strengthening of financial literacy programs to help individuals avoid financial hardship and develop lifelong security

**HEALTH**

**ENSURING ACCESS TO CARE AND PREVENTING CHRONIC DISEASE**

Access to affordable, quality health coverage is the key to ensuring Illinoisans can lead healthy lives. Receiving healthcare early in life and throughout adulthood is an important way to prevent obesity and chronic diseases that are becoming more prevalent today.

To ensure families and individuals are able to live healthy lives, United Way of Illinois will:

- Support access to healthcare by connecting people to affordable, comprehensive health services
- Combat preventable chronic disease through the promotion of strategies that support wellness and healthy lifestyles
Much like roads, hospitals and schools, community services are part of our state’s vital public infrastructure that must be maintained and strengthened. In order to continue advancing the common good, we must make sure the state has a well-managed and highly coordinated network of community services.

To ensure Illinois has the essential services that protect public health and safety, revitalize local economies and enhance learning, United Way of Illinois will:

- Advocate for a state budget that adequately funds strategic investments in Illinois’ health and human services
- Promote fair, efficient and transparent contracting practices between service providers and government funders
- Support efforts to reduce unnecessary state administrative burdens on human service providers and their programs
- Enhance community resources that ensure a seamless infrastructure of health and human service support for those in need

If you have questions or would like more information, please visit [unitedwayillinois.org](http://unitedwayillinois.org) or contact:

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