



Affordable, Accessible, Quality Health Care for ALL

*An Appeal to the Leaders of the Illinois General Assembly
to Overcome Their Differences in Order to Address Pressing Issues*

Dear Leaders of the Illinois General Assembly;

As members of different faith communities we are united in our disappointment that the Illinois General Assembly failed to achieve, during the regular spring session, the kind of tax reforms that would address pressing issues in health care, education, social services, public transportation, infrastructure, and other functions of state government.

We know there are differences, not just between the Republicans and Democrats, but also within your parties and among different regions and populations of the state.

We too have our differences, not just among but also within our religious communities. But we are united – despite all our small and significant differences – in believing that elected officials have a special responsibility for assuring the well being of all residents of the state.

That surely means that all children in Illinois have an opportunity to succeed based on quality education. But that cannot happen, as you are undoubtedly aware, if education in this state is funded primarily by property taxes.

Similarly, all residents of the state need access to quality health care, whatever their age or economic status. But the patchwork system currently in place, along with steadily rising health care costs, virtually assures that this expectation cannot be met. A new way must be found.

If the state is not itself going to provide the whole range of required social services for those in need, we can no longer expect contracted social services agencies – many of which are religiously affiliated – to bear long delays in reimbursement or reduced allocations for the services provided.

In addition, if Illinois continues to drastically under-fund its pension programs, it will not only place public employees in danger, but it will also undermine our state's standing with bonding authorities.

In the metropolitan areas, where public transportation is absolutely essential for residents and a key ingredient for the economic health of the whole state, substantial subsidies are clearly required.

We recognize that these wide-ranging and large demands on state government are costly and that almost no one welcomes increased taxes. But based upon what we are hearing from the various communities and components of our state, there is now a broad spectrum of Illinoisans – including businesses, labor, providers, religious communities and many others – who realize that significant new funds must be generated through a reformed tax system that is fair and sustainable.

(continued)

A Project of the Campaign for Better Health Care

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Residents of our state are ready for the needed changes; however, differences among our political leaders are prohibiting these changes from occurring.

We appeal to you and plead with you to overcome whatever differences are standing in the way of an accord that will give all Illinois children an equal chance of achieving their God-given potential, provide all Illinois residents with the health care they deserve, allow social service agencies to work with those in need, and support public transportation, pension programs and infrastructure projects.

Our appeal and plea is not for one specific strategy or another. We expect that agreement will come only through some combination of strategies, achieved through serious negotiations conducted in good faith among you.

Given this, we urge you to start and successfully conclude such negotiations during this extended session of the General Assembly.

Be assured that you are in our prayers as you seek to fulfill the needs and mandates of all the people you represent.

Sincerely,

Rev. Walter Wilkins, Glasford United Methodist Church
Glasford
Ken Aud, United Congregations of Metro East,
Granite City
Dr. Paul Koptak, Evangelical Covenant Church,
Chicago
Rev. Donna Harper, UCC, Chicago
Janet Anderson, United Methodist Church,
Champaign
Donald Swanson, Lutheran Church,
Des Plaines
Rev. Jeffrey Phillips, St. John UCC, Arlington
Heights
Chaplain Rosemary Kimpel, Congregational Church,
Arlington Heights
Gloria CamCam, UCC, Chicago
Jeanette Ervin, United Congregations of Metro East,
Belleville
Rev. Dr. J Harley Chapman, Chicago Metropolitan
Association UCC, Palatine
Dr. Mark Shields, Health Providers Fellowship,
Chicago
Ron & Mary Trimmer, United Congregations of
Metro East, Mitchell
Rev. Sandra Hutchins, UCC, Chicago
The Rev. Hope Molozyly, Northfield Community
Church UCC, Northfield
**Jewell Perkins, President, Church Women United
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Sharon Motes, United Congregations of Metro East,
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Rev. Timothy Piasecki, Roman Catholic, Aurora
**Rev. Dr. Larry Ulrich, Illinois/Wisconsin District
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Alice Spitzer, United Methodist Church, Peoria
Sister Louise Nolta, Chicago
Rev. David Inglis, First Congregation Church UCC,
Western Springs
Marcia Custer, Unitarian Church, Edwardsville
Joan Criswell, First Baptist Church, Peoria
Rev. Susan ChamberlinSmith, Trinity UCC,
Deerfield
Mary Larsen, First Congregational Church, Western
Springs
Rev. Kirsten Peachey, United Church of Christ, Oak
Park
Nelvie Anderson, Church Women United in Illinois,
Westminster Presbyterian, Peoria
Herb Best, Social Action Ministry Team,
Congregational UCC, Arlington Heights
Rev. Meigan Cameron, Epiphany Episcopal, Chicago
Carol Juen, St. Cecilia Catholic Church, Glen Carbon
Rev. Warren Wiggins, St. Peter Community Church,
Northbrook
Marjorie Parker, Church of the Good Shepherd UCC,
Carbondale
Rev. Cynthia Stahler, United Church of Christ,
Chicago
Frances Nohling, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, St.
Charles
Rev. Pamela Sten, Episcopal Church, Glenview
Gary Benz, First Congregational Church, Wilmette
Deacon Harlette Washington, The Congregational
Church of Park Manor, Chicago
Patricia Henggeler, St. Nicholas Catholic Church,
O'Fallon
Rev. Victor Coriano, Christian Church (Disciples of
Christ), Dolton

Sonya Hirschberg, Hyde Park Union Church,
Chicago
**Rev. Dr. Frederick Aigner, Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America, Des Plaines**
Sister Rosemary Lynch, Institute of the Blessed
Virgin Mary, Wheaton
Nancy Hagstrom, United Methodist Church,
Evanston Rev. Dr. Janette Wilson, International
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Pastor Barbara Lohrbach, St. John UCC, Kankakee
Rev. James Benn, Eden United Church of Christ,
Chicago
Jeanne Parker, Central United Methodist Church,
Skokie
Rector Kara WagnerSherer, St John's Episcopal
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Don Pierson, Lake Forest
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Conference of the UCC, Chicago**
Joseph Feldman, UCC, Trenton
Rev. Janice Powell, Pilgrim Congregational Church
UCC, Oak Park
Lydia Olsen, Social Action Co-Chair, ELCA, Mt.
Prospect
Rebecca Blerbaum, UCC, Alton
Rev. Richard James, Lincoln Memorial Congregation
UCC, Chicago
Stuart Jamieson, Presbyterian Church, Oak Park
Rev. Fr. Emeka Nwachuku, St. Andrew's Pentacost
Episcopal Church, Evanston
Rector Daphne Cody, St. Elisabeth's Episcopal
Church, Glencoe
Arlene Ashack, Director of Justice, Peace, Integrity
of Creation Committee, Wheaton
Rev. Robert Burkhart, Central United Methodist
Church, Skokie
James Risk, Executive Director, Bishop Anderson
House, Chicago
Rev. Kathy KeenerHan, Berkeley-Hillside
Presbyterian Church, Villa Park
David & Laura Andrew, UCC, Naperville
Rev. Nicole Urbach, Hyde Park Union Church,
Chicago
Elder Dorothy Fletcher, Lake Forest Presbyterian
Church, Lake Bluff
Harriet Reelitz, Chicago
Rev Alice Davenport, Presbyterian Church, Macomb
Debbie Jones, Baptist Church, Rockford
Mary Anderson, Lutheran Church of the Atonement,
Barrington
Rev. James Roghair, Presbyterian Church, Evanston
Robert Crowe, Winnetka Presbyterian Church,
Winnetka
Rev. John Hoekwater, Many Peoples Church,
Chicago

Toni Perrin, Catholic Church, East St. Louis
Rev. Carol Shanks, United Church of Christ,
Waterloo
Lynne Hubers, Loop Christian Ministries, Chicago
Rev. Carol Currier Frighetto, St. Paul's United
Church of Christ, Manhattan
Sarah Katula, United Methodist Church, Wheaton
The Rev. Howard Milkman, Presbyterian Church,
Woodridge
Mary Stitt, First United Methodist Church, Arlington
Heights
Elder Neil Adams, College Ave Presbyterian, Moro
Rev. Ray Greenfield, Lewistown Christian Church,
Ipava Christian Church (Disciples of Christ),
Lewistown
Sandra Franz, St. Aphonsus Church, Chicago
Elder Mary Dame, First Presbyterian Church, Granite
City
Rev. Joseph Snider, Palos United Methodist Church,
Palos Heights
Gerald Gilman, Unitarian Church, Edwardsville
Deacon William Maurer, St. Jerome Catholic Church,
Troy
Lois Gibson, Associate Conference Minister, Illinois
South Conference of United Church of Christ,
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The Rev. Mary Knightwright, United Methodist
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Rev. Walter Gerth, retired, UCC, O'Fallon
Catherine Mikes, First United Methodist Church,
Downers Grove
Rev. John Klueter, UCC, Highland
Michael Bedesky, Edwardsville
Rev. Joyce Shin, Fourth Presbyterian Church,
Chicago
Richard Conser, Golf
Kathleen Loepker, Belleville
Rev. Edward Bergstraesser, First United Church, Oak
Park
Sister Ewa Dziuk, Northfield
Rev. James Bullion, retired, Lake Zurich
Ann Legg, Presbyterian Church, Woodstock
Alison Hubbard-Miller, Chicago
Rev. Cathleen Brookman, Chicago
John Farley, Edwardsville
Rev. Emery Percell, United Methodist Church,
Chicago
Ida Hill, Mulberry Grove
Chaplain Dolores Wiens, Episcopal Church, Chicago
Jeff Scott, Church Council Chair, Wesley United
Methodist Church, Urbana
Rev. Paul Palmer, Presbyterian Church, Arlington
Heights
Laura Leon, Council Member, St. Mary's Hope
Lutheran Church, Chicago
John Fish, University Church, Chicago

Karen Kress, Lutheran Church, Oak Park
Katharine Bensen, Augustana Lutheran Church of Hyde Park, Chicago
Mark Schimmelpfennig, Seminarian, McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago
James Will, Professor Emeritus, Garrett-Evangelical Seminary, Arlington Heights
Chaplain Joseph Czolgosz, Advocate Lutheran General Hospital, Park Ridge
Rev. Miley Palmer, United Methodist Church, Decatur
Rev. David Moffett Moore, St. Peter's UCC, Frankfort
Shelly Heideman, Executive Director of Elizabeth Ann Seton Program, Springfield
Michael Lampe, Music Minister at St. Clare Catholic Church, O'Fallon
Cheryl Sommer, Catholic Pastoral Associate, O'Fallon
Rev. Rudra Vilius Dundzila, Unitarian Church, Chicago
Roger Dart, Deerfield
Rev. Rex Piercy, Congregational UCC, Arlington Heights
Marilyn Breitling, UCC, Swansea
Ann Kleboe, UCC, La Grange
Patricia Navadomskis, Catholic Church, Evergreen Park
Richard Ullman, UCC, Highland
Rev. Ralph Cook, Congregational Church (UCC) of Jefferson Park, Chicago
Adrienne Ray, Chicago
Rev. Leslie Ritter-Jenkins, UCC, Western Springs
Paula Snider, Palos Heights
Rev. Michael Kitt, Episcopal Church, Park Ridge
Cindy Ball, Chicago
Rev. Sally Iberg, UCC, Evanston
Michael Bollman, Edwardsville
Reverend Barbara Taylor, Glencoe
Denice Norris, Chicago
Rev. William Bordonaro, Bethany UCC, Chicago
Jan Daker, Belleville
Rev. Jose Rosa, First Congregational Church, Chicago
Elizabeth Bradner, Mission Committee, Presbyterian Church, Lake Forest
Rev. Fr. Primo Racino, St. Margaret of Scotland Episcopal Church, Chicago
Catherine Schultz, Hinsdale
Rev. Lynne Kelley, American Baptist Churches of Metro Chicago, Arlington Heights
Dianne Smith, Calumet City
Rev. Emery Percell, retired, United Methodist Church, Chicago
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Rev. Jim Honig, Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church, Glen Ellyn
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Sister Sue Kilduski, Benedictine Sisters of Chicago
Aline Russell, Alton
Claudia Austin, Vice-President, Church Women United in Illinois, Northfield
Tony Kelly, Evanston
The Rev. Dr. Larry Greenfield, Executive Minister, American Baptist Churches of Metro Chicago
Dr. Niva Lubin Johnson, UCC, Chicago
Rev. Daniel Schwick, Assistant to the President, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois, Des Plaines
Dennis Barker, Collinsville
Bathsheba Draper, Park Forest
Rev. Jean Darling, New Garden Community Church (Unitarian Universalist), Oak Park
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James Bayley, Wilmette
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Imam Kifah Mustapha, The Mosque Foundation, Bridgeview
The Rev. Julie Smith, Glendale Charge United Methodist Church, Simpson
Theresa O'Connor, St. Ambrose Church of Godfry, Alton
Rev. Gregory Skiba, First Congregational UCC, Naperville
Nan Adams, Presbyterian Church, Moro
John Lionberger, Renewal in the Wilderness, Evanston
The Rt. Rev. William Percell, Bishop, Episcopal Church of Chicago
Roger Dart, Church in Society Committee, UCC, Deerfield
Robert Ford, Trustee, Peoples Church, Chicago