

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS
COUNTY DEPARTMENT, CHANCERY DIVISION**

ILLINOIS COLLABORATION ON YOUTH, <i>et al.</i> ,)	
)	
Plaintiffs,)	
)	Case No. 2016 CH 6172
v.)	
)	
BRUCE RAUNER, GOVERNOR OF ILLINOIS, in his)	
official capacity, <i>et al.</i> ,)	
)	
Defendants.)	

AFFIDAVIT OF POLLY POSKIN

1. My name is Polly Poskin.
2. I am the Executive Director of the Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault (ICASA).
3. ICASA is a network of 29 rape crisis centers that served approximately 18,000 victims of sexual assault last year throughout Illinois. We are the only providers of free, confidential victim counseling services in this state. We provided 66,000 hours of counseling in the last fiscal year.
4. Almost half (45%) of our centers' funding comes from the state of Illinois, via the Department of Human Services. For nearly a full year, none of the centers have received any of their contracted funds.
5. The unpaid contracts amount to over \$6,000,000. Although federal funds makes up the remainder, if state funding is not forthcoming, numerous of our rape crisis centers will close. As a result, they will lose their federal funding as well.

6. Our advocates meet victims at the hospital 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days per year, providing crisis intervention, medical advocacy, and supportive counseling. If the centers close down, victims lose this service.

7. Victims will also lose access to our hotlines, which currently provides 24-hour crisis intervention, emergency referrals, and counseling.

8. Because of the millions of dollars in missing funding, 17 of our centers have laid off staff or reduced hours. Also, 31 full-time equivalent positions are unfilled, which represents 1,240 hours a week of services that victims have already lost. In addition, many of our centers have reduced the salaries of remaining staff.

9. When our centers close, there will be no office to go to and no hotline to call. When communities believe that justice will not be served and support for sexual assault victims is not available, their sense of safety will be reduced. So, I believe, will communities' actual safety.

10. Specifically, the justice system will suffer when our network shuts down. Police and prosecutors need access to sexual assault victims - as close in time to the assault as possible - in order to make their case. Without our hotline and in-person advocates, many victims will not interact with these "first responders" promptly, or even at all.

11. For years, our network has fostered relationships with first responders and allies, such as hospital personnel, law enforcement, prosecutors, probation staff, child advocates and protective services. Without our assistance, many of these first responders lack the resources to provide the care and support that victims need after trauma.

12. Because sexual assault victims must serve as witnesses against their perpetrators, ICASA has long supported and counseled victims during their criminal proceedings. This support kept many victims invested in the prosecutions of their assailants, without which their fear and trauma may drive them from the justice system. In fiscal year 2015, we provided 12,527 hours of this criminal justice advocacy. Should ICASA centers shut down, we believe that many victims will stop participating in their criminal cases, and numerous sexual perpetrators will go free. Sexual assault recidivism will proliferate.

13. The rape crisis centers belonging to ICASA are also key to sex assault prevention education in the state. Our public educators taught over 650,000 Illinois school-aged youth in K-12 schools, colleges, civic organization, and after-school programs.

Under penalties as provided by law pursuant to Section 1-109 of the Code of Civil Procedure, the undersigned certifies that the statements set forth in this instrument are true and correct, except as to matters therein stated to be on information and belief and as to such matters the undersigned certifies as aforesaid that she verily believes the same to be true.

5/24/16

Date


Polly Poskin