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1 AMENDMENT TO SENATE BILL 3208

2 AMENDMENT NO. _____. Amend Senate Bill 3208 by replacing
3 everything after the enacting clause with the following:

4 "Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the
5 Illinois African-American Family Commission Act.

6 Section 5. Legislative findings. It is the policy of this
7 State to promote family preservation and to preserve and
8 strengthen families. Over 12 million people live in Illinois.
9 African-Americans represent 15% of the population and 26% of
10 the residents living in Cook County. Despite some progress over
11 the last few decades, African-Americans in Illinois continue to
12 lag behind other racial groups relative to indicators of
13 well-being in education, employment, income, and health.
14 According to the 2000 U.S. Census, just 26% of the
15 African-American population over 25 years of age in Illinois
16 completed their high school education; 6% held an associate's
17 degree; less than 10% (9%) held a bachelor's degree; less than
18 5% (3%) held a master's degree; and less than one percent held
19 either a professional (.8%) or doctoral (.4%) degree.

20 These levels of education attainment reflect more
21 fundamental problems with retaining African-Americans in
22 school. The Illinois State Board of Education reported that for
23 the 2001-2002 school year, 36,373, or 6%, of students enrolled
24 in public high schools dropped out. Thirty-nine percent of

1 these students were African-Americans; 38% were White; 21% were
2 Hispanic; and 2% were classified as Other.

3 Although African-Americans make up 18% of the high school
4 population, they are disproportionately represented in the
5 number of students who are suspended and expelled. In the
6 2001-2002 school year, 29,068 students were suspended from
7 school. Forty-seven percent were White, 37% were
8 African-American, 14% were Hispanic, and 1% were classified as
9 Other. In regards to expulsions Statewide, the total number of
10 high school students expelled was 1,651. Forty-three percent
11 were African-American, 41% were White; 14% were Hispanic; and
12 2% were classified as Other. Within Chicago public schools, 448
13 students were expelled. Seventy-seven of these students were
14 African-American; 27% were White; 14% were Hispanic; and 4%
15 were classified as Other. The fact that African-Americans are
16 more likely to be suspended or expelled from school also
17 contributes to the high dropout rate among African-American
18 high school students.

19 In addition to educational challenges, African-Americans
20 face challenges in the areas of employment and income. In the
21 year 2000, the unemployment rate for African-Americans age 16
22 years or older was 15% compared to only 6% for the total
23 Illinois population. Moreover, the median household income of
24 African-Americans in Illinois was \$31,699 compared to \$46,590
25 for the total Illinois population, and the percentage of
26 African-American families below the poverty level in Illinois
27 was 26% percent in 1999 compared to 10.7% for the total
28 Illinois population in that same year.

29 Indicators of child welfare and criminal justice reveal
30 still more challenges that African-American families face in
31 Illinois. In 2000, African-American children represented 18%
32 of children 18 years of age and under, but comprised 73% of
33 children in substitute care. African-Americans are also
34 overrepresented in the criminal justice population. Of the

1 total Illinois adult inmate population in the year 2000, 65%
2 were African-American. During this same time period,
3 African-American youth represented 58% of the juvenile inmate
4 population in Illinois.

5 While the leading causes of death among African-Americans
6 are the same as those for the general population in Illinois,
7 African-Americans have a higher rate of death per 100,000
8 residents. The rate of overall deaths per 100,000 residents
9 among African-Americans in the year 2000 was 1,181; 847 for
10 Whites; and 411 for those classified as Other. The rate of
11 cancer-related deaths per 100,000 residents by racial or ethnic
12 groups in 2000 was: 278 African-Americans; 206 Whites; and 110
13 of those classified as Other. The rate of diabetes-related
14 deaths per 100,000 residents among African-Americans in 2000
15 was 41 compared to 23 for Whites and 13 for those classified as
16 Other. The rate of deaths per 100,000 residents by heart
17 disease among African-Americans in 2000 was 352 compared to 257
18 for Whites and 120 for those classified as Other. The rate of
19 deaths per 100,000 residents by stroke among African-Americans
20 in 2000 was 75; 60 for Whites; and 35 for those classified as
21 Other.

22 African-Americans had higher rates of smoking and obesity
23 than other racial groups in Illinois in 2001. African-Americans
24 accounted for more of the new adult/adolescent AIDS cases,
25 cumulative adult/adolescent AIDS cases, and number of people
26 living with AIDS than other racial groups in Illinois in the
27 year 2002. Still, 23% of uninsured persons in Illinois are
28 African-American.

29 These huge disparities in education, employment, income,
30 child welfare, criminal justice, and health demonstrate the
31 tremendous challenges facing the African-American family in
32 Illinois. These challenges are severe. There is a need for
33 government, child and family advocates, and other key
34 stakeholders to create and implement public policies to address

1 the health and social crises facing African-American families.
2 The development of given solutions clearly transcends any one
3 State agency and requires a coordinated effort. The Illinois
4 African-American Family Commission shall assist State agencies
5 with this task.

6 The African-American Family Commission was created in
7 October 1994 by Executive Order to assist the Illinois
8 Department of Children and Family Services in developing and
9 implementing programs and public policies that affect the
10 State's child welfare system. The Commission has a proven track
11 record of bringing State agencies, community providers, and
12 consumers together to address child welfare issues. The ability
13 of the Commission to address the above-mentioned health issues,
14 community factors, and the personal well-being of
15 African-American families and children has been limited due to
16 the Executive Order's focus on child welfare. It is apparent
17 that broader issues of health, mental health, criminal justice,
18 education, and economic development also directly affect the
19 health and well-being of African-American families and
20 children. Accordingly, the role of the African-American Family
21 Commission is hereby expanded to encompass working
22 relationships with every department, agency, and commission
23 within State government if any of its activities impact
24 African-American children and families. The focus of the
25 Commission is hereby restructured and shall exist by
26 legislative mandate to engage State agencies in its efforts to
27 preserve and strengthen African-American families.

28 Section 10. Illinois African-American Family Commission
29 established. The African-American Family Commission shall be
30 renamed and established as the Illinois African-American
31 Family Commission.

32 Section 15. Purpose and objectives.

1 (a) The purpose of the Illinois African-American Family
2 Commission is to guide the efforts of and collaborate with the
3 Department on Aging, the Department of Children and Family
4 Services, the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity,
5 the Department of Corrections, the Department of Human
6 Services, the Department of Public Aid, the Department of
7 Public Health, the Department of Transportation, and others to
8 improve and expand existing human services and educational and
9 community development programs for African-Americans. This
10 will be achieved by:

11 (1) Monitoring existing legislation and programs
12 designed to address the needs of African-Americans in
13 Illinois;

14 (2) Assisting State agencies in developing programs,
15 services, public policies, and research strategies that
16 will expand and enhance the social and economic well-being
17 of African-American children and families; and

18 (3) Facilitating the participation of
19 African-Americans in the development, implementation, and
20 planning of community-based services.

21 The work of the Illinois African-American Family
22 Commission shall include the use of existing reports, research
23 and planning efforts, procedures, and programs.

24 Section 20. Appointment; terms. The Illinois
25 African-American Family Commission shall be comprised of 15
26 members who shall be appointed by the Governor. Each member
27 shall have a working knowledge of human services, community
28 development, and economic public policies in Illinois. The
29 Governor shall appoint the chairperson or chairpersons.

30 The members shall reflect regional representation to
31 ensure that the needs of African-American families and children
32 throughout the State of Illinois are met. The members shall be
33 selected from a variety of disciplines. They shall be

1 representative of a partnership and collaborative effort
2 between public and private agencies, the business sector, and
3 community-based human services organizations.

4 Members shall serve 3-year terms, except in the case of
5 initial appointments. One-third of initially-appointed
6 members, as determined by lot, shall be appointed to 1-year
7 terms; 1/3 shall be appointed to 2-year terms; and 1/3 shall be
8 appointed to 3-year terms, so that the terms are staggered.
9 Members will serve without compensation, but shall be
10 reimbursed for Commission-related expenses.

11 The Department on Aging, the Department of Children and
12 Family Services, the Department of Commerce and Economic
13 Opportunity, the Department of Corrections, the Department of
14 Human Services, the Department of Public Aid, the Department of
15 Public Health, and the Department of Transportation shall each
16 appoint a liaison to serve ex-officio on the Commission.

17 Section 25. Funding. The African-American Family
18 Commission shall receive funding through appropriations
19 available for its purposes made to the Department on Aging, the
20 Department of Children and Family Services, the Department of
21 Commerce and Economic Opportunity, the Department of
22 Corrections, the Department of Human Services, the Department
23 of Public Aid, the Department of Public Health, and the
24 Department of Transportation.

25 Section 30. Reporting. The Illinois African-American
26 Family Commission shall annually report to the Governor and the
27 General Assembly on the Commission's progress toward its goals
28 and objectives.

29 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon
30 becoming law."