Statement from The Arc of Illinois on Illinois’s Ranking for Community Based Services

April 5, 2023

Today I received updated information on how Illinois’s spending on community services compared to the rest of the nation in Fiscal Year 2019.

The news is not good.

The latest information from The State of the States in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities indicates that in Fiscal Year 2019 (July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019):

- Illinois ranked 49th in the nation in fiscal effort on community services (this means it ranks 49th when controlling for state wealth). Only Nevada and Texas spend LESS than Illinois comparatively.
- Illinois ranked 4th in the nation in fiscal effort for institutional services (also controlling for wealth). The only states that invest MORE funding into institutional services than Illinois comparatively are Iowa, Mississippi, & Arkansas.

With the Choate transformation underway, I am hopeful that we will see increased investments in the community, particularly in light of the expected budget surplus. For community-based providers to best support people transitioning out of Choate Developmental Center, we will need to see another historic investment in community-based services. A great place to start is by meeting the Guidehouse Rate Study’s recommendation that Direct Support Professional (DSP) wages should be increased by $4 per hour. The Governor’s proposed budget includes only a $1.50 per hour increase. SB2026 and HB3569 would implement a $4 per hour DSP wage increase beginning 1/1/24. Learn more here and here.

--- Amie Lulinski, PhD, Executive Director