

I suggest that the County Board apply a portion of our American Rescue Plan award to address the storm water runoff at the Brookens building by replacing the parking lots with permeable pavement. The ARPA expressly names water management as among its qualified uses.

Replacing Brookens' parking lots with permeable pavement, a filter strip and outlets will improve water quality in the local watershed before it enters the adjacent Weaver Park wetland. It would create a storm water wetland in the northern portion of Prairie Park, which would then take the storm water from the upstream (the Brookens Center) and filter it before it enters the neighboring Weaver Park.

Having permeable parking lots at Brookens would tie in nicely with what Urbana Park District has already invested in the neighboring parks. We should coordinate this project with them.

At an earlier time, the county felt it wasn't (yet) feasible for the county to apply for a Green Infrastructure Grant Opportunity (GIGO) from the Illinois EPA—even though state would pick up eighty percent of the project cost!—because the grant required us to provide the remaining twenty percent, and we would then only break even compared to blacktop. Break even, that is, if you only look at the short-term cost.

But now we can apply ARPA funds to leverage four state dollars for each one of ours, and in so doing, effectuate long-term and property-friendly stewardship of the earth.

Thank you,

John Bergee
Champaign

Champaign County has a need for accessible and affordable high-quality early childhood programming. While we have some strong public early childhood options, including our Unit 4 and Unit 116 Early Childhood Programs and Head Start, those seats are limited and many of our community's children do not have access to high-quality early childhood education unless their families are able to pay for private options. This disparity between families with financial resources to pay for high-quality programs and those who do not have those resources is one of the root causes of our academic achievement gap in our K-12 public schools. I see this as an educator in the public-school system. We see children coming to school with very little exposure to pre-literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional foundational skills, and students who have already had extensive exposure to develop these skills. These disparities have only been exacerbated by COVID-19. We have the opportunity to address this gap in access to high-quality early childhood programming. I propose that money from the American Rescue Plan Act be utilized to provide grants to non-profit and public organizations that aspire to build high-quality, research-based early childhood education programs, with a particular emphasis on serving currently underserved populations. We have a wealth of expertise in our community to increase early childhood educational opportunities. The Champaign County Board can support this vital work by providing funding through the ARPA.

Melissa Hines Shungu

Increasing availability of affordable, reliable, high-bandwidth broadband connectivity throughout the County is a goal worthy of your support. While there are areas in Champaign-Urbana that have benefited from broadband investments by i3 Broadband and UC2B's 2010 Federal and State grants; and areas of Mahomet, Thomasboro and St. Joseph that have benefited from broadband investments by Pavlov and Volo; there remain entire communities and many farm families in Champaign County that are woefully underserved with modern broadband.

The pandemic exposed the great number of families in Champaign County whose homes lacked sufficient internet connectivity to allow their children to fully participate in on-line classes. Precision agriculture also requires robust broadband connectivity to be successful. The ARPA funding is an opportunity for Champaign County to help both its students and its farmers access the online tools they need to succeed.

There are two initiatives that the County Board could support that will help both students and farmers. For less than 0.5% of the County's ARPA funds, you could commission a countywide strategic broadband plan that included technical solutions. In partnership with the Cities of Urbana and Champaign, UC2B is investigating seeking State funding for building fiber-to-the curb in some two dozen census block groups that have high rates of poverty. For less than 2.5% of the ARPA funds, the County and UC2B could seek State funding for building fiber in six census block groups in unincorporated areas that have high rates of poverty and concentrations of District 116 and Unit 4 students.

Mike Smeltzer
UC2B Board Member
2701 Southfield Court
Champaign, 61821
(217) 369-6022

Rural broadband is critical for rural members of Champaign County. We are totally underserved and experience delays, outages and are often underserved with outdated equipment. We are customers of Volo, and since we are on the edge of town, our wireless signal is often deficient. Their repairman (Shh-) told us the equipment is seriously out of date. NO ONE wants to invest in the infrastructure needed to bring us into step with the rest of the world.

Please consider using Covid relief funds given to the county to help rural needs.

Paulette Brock

Historical, systemic, and pandemic-related traumas continue to harm and disrupt our families and communities. Addressing these traumatic experiences is critical to prioritizing health, healing, and hope in our communities and schools. A Center for Radical Healing is a critical need in Champaign County. This Center would be designed to provide culturally embedded services to people most impacted by intersecting forms of oppression in Champaign County. Radical healing is the process of thriving in the face of identity-based wounds, such as racism and class exploitation. Although focusing on educational and mental health, the Center would provide services to promote general wellbeing among children,

families, and communities. Adopting a trauma-informed, strength-based approach, the Center would offer individual, family, and group counseling, community healing circles, career development, early childhood education, adult learning opportunities, civic engagement training across the lifespan, and limited medical and legal services. Working with community members and stakeholders, the center would identify key social concerns (e.g., gun violence, lack of jobs, limited activities for teens, etc.) and establish cross-disciplinary, intergenerational connections to identify and implement innovative solutions.

Please let me know if you can include this statement in the meeting packet. Do you need any additional information from me? Am I supposed to add a proposed dollar amount?

Tracy D. Dace

Founder

DREAAM - Driven to Reach Excellence & Academic Achievement for Males

302 West Church Street, Champaign, IL 61820

(217) 530-0110 (office)

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tracy@dreaaam.org

www.dreaaam.org

It is the desire of the McClain Pipeline Foundation's Foster Grandparent Program (MPFFGP) to apply for funding from the county funds provided through the ARPA. Our Foundation through the Foster Grandparent Program provided support for 100 families during the covid 19 pandemic. We provided this service through donations from private donors. We did not receive any stimulus grants funding. Parents needed mentorship with navigating the new system of getting chrome books and schoolwork, food, youth face masks and containers to keep books and assignments in. Our program delivered snacks, burgers, printed age appropriate schoolwork and assistance in getting chrome books from Champaign schools. During the school year, we need assistance with stipend funding for the foster grandparents to assist in the classrooms in Champaign schools. This summer we want to provide tutorial help through our Foster Grandparent program to include fitness and wellness through our basketball development program free of charge to our youth. Youth need avenues to develop and have fun to stay encouraged and motivated. The MPEEGP addresses Education: Childhood Success and Grade Level Success; Financial Stability: Financial Literacy and Workforce Development; Health: Access to Healthcare and Access to Health Foods and fitness. The funding we are asking for today from ARPA will be used to pay stipend salaries for FGPs for helping the classroom teacher with student assistance with reading and math during the summer and school year, that includes wellness, music, basketball and fitness development. We hope you find our cause just, our commitment to our community hopeful, and our purpose worthy of your funding.

Sincerely,

Robin McClain

Wayne McClain Pipeline Foundation

mcclain.rob@gmail.com



URBANA &
CHAMPAIGN
SANITARY
DISTRICT

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Jerry Lyke

Jenny Putman

Ladell Myrick

Executive Director

Rick Manner

P.O. BOX 669 • 1100 E. UNIVERSITY AVE. • URBANA, IL 61803-0669 • (217) 367-3409 • FAX (217) 367-2603

May 21, 2021

Dear County Board Members,

My understanding of the purpose of the COVID relief bills is that they are intended to overcome the economic chaos created by the pandemic. I'm writing today to encourage you to expend as much of the *American Rescue Plan* funds as you can afford to shoring up the underpinnings of the local economy – basic infrastructure. In my view, not addressing the accumulated economic distress here will make developing a post-COVID economy in Champaign County extremely difficult.

Looking specifically at UCSD, I'd like to highlight three intransigent issues regarding billing or income and explain the impacts that are an inevitable result of these difficulties. At UCSD we currently have over 4,000 accounts with over \$600,000 of unpaid past due balances. Of these Past Due accounts, 1/3 have made no payment for 120+ days. Numerous accounts have accumulated debt that goes back 15+ months (i.e. no payment since COVID began). And while we are not threatening disconnections currently, if we were, fully 1,300 accounts would be in that situation. This is 25 times the normal level.

In addition, due to the reductions in flow from businesses and the University about \$800,000 of billings that would normally have been made didn't happen. Finally, fees from new development cratered, dropping by another \$700,000. In summary, every source of income for UCSD has been seriously hit - we do not charge any Property Tax. Our FY22 projected deficit is in excess of \$2.5 million.

If the District digs out from this record-breaking financial mess using only our own resources, we will eventually get back to being whole. But that will take years and we will inevitably put a drag on the local economy. We will be spending less and we will be obliging ratepayers to replace the lost income.

In the short term, we must both tap our reserves and reduce next year's costs by deferring maintenance or replacement of equipment. But reduced preventative maintenance has a long-term cost of increased equipment failures. Also, the ratepayers that are Past Due will be faced with higher bills for months or years as they pay down their accumulated indebtedness (for many this will extend into 2023!). In the longer-term, we will need to replenish the reserves and return to normal levels of maintenance. To manage that, development fees and user charges generally will increase in 2022 and later.

In an attempt to reduce this economic drag, UCSD will be seeking *American Rescue Plan* funds to expand upon the billing assistance offered to Past Due accounts. (UCSD and our billing partners of Urbana and Champaign already contracted with Regional Planning Commission for an initial plan.) We will also be seeking other assistance that will help us return to the level of preventative maintenance and reliability that residents expect. I hope you will be able to look favorably on these requests.

Sincerely,

Rick Manner
Executive Director





May 7, 2021

Champaign County Board
Attn: The Honorable Kyle Patterson, Chair
1776 East Washington Street
Urbana, IL 61802

Dear Chair Patterson:

Like most local agencies the Champaign Park District has lost over \$1.8 million in revenues during the past year due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Despite this fact, the Park Board of Commissioners were still able to support the community in a variety of different ways during the past 14 months. The District was at the forefront of a variety of pandemic efforts specifically by opening its facilities to partner with those in need, such as CU at Home to provide socially distanced sleeping space for our community's most vulnerable individuals at the Douglass Community Center, the Public Health District as a vaccination center at the Douglass Community Center, the Champaign Police Department to provide office space at the Bresnan Meeting Center, and local restaurants by providing picnic tables and staff for the downtown picnic parks last summer.

At the same time, we pivoted to offer a variety of safe and innovative in-person and virtual programs for our residents. The Park District staff created and offered numerous programs to keep the youth in the community active and when possible, our facilities were open to provide activities. The Park District also expanded its capacity due to increased park because of the stay at home order and subsequent restrictions. It was clear, the residents needed the parks to walk, exercise, and reduce stress. The parks also provided playgrounds, tennis courts, pickleball courts, basketball courts, splash pads, and most importantly a safe place to walk or run on the path. Despite increased use, the Park District maintained clean and safe parks and amenities.

The Park District also made many significant financial investments to improve our parks and facilities and keep many staff and contractors employed during the past year with the following projects being completed or started during this period:

- Started the \$12 million dollars' worth of improvements to Human Kinetics Park and the new Martens Center on North Market Street.
- Improvements to Spalding Park.
- Improvements to Heritage Park.

Champaign Park District
706 Kenwood Road
Champaign, Illinois 61821-4112
217.398.2550 Phone
217.355.8421 Fax
www.champaignparks.org

Park Commissioners
Craig W. Hays
Barbara J. Kuhl
Timothy P. McMahon
Kevin J. Miller
Jane L. Solon

Officers
Jarrod Scheunemann, *Secretary*
Guy C. Hall, *Attorney*
Brenda Timmons, *Treasurer*
Joseph C. DeLuce, *Executive Director*

Our mission is to enhance our community's quality of life through positive experiences in parks, recreation, and cultural arts.

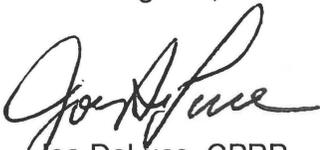


- New sound system for the Virginia Theatre and we are starting on a new HVAC system at the theatre.
- Improvements to the old Leonhard Recreation to be a new safe space for Champaign-Urbana Special Recreation.
- Working with the City on the new Bristol Park.

The Federal Government passed the American Rescue Plan which will provide funding for local cities and counties to support the efforts in recovery from the pandemic, but local Park Districts were left out of the funding unless the local city or county would provide funds to assist the Park District in recovery. The Champaign Park District respectfully requests your consideration of supporting its efforts in north Champaign. The City's investment and partnership at Bristol Park has made a significant impact in this area, and we believe the City's continued financial investment and partnership to complete the Martens Center and the Human Kinetics Park will ensure lasting regional change for many years to come. The Martens Center will also host the Don Moyer Boys and Girls Club afterschool program and summer day camp starting in 2022. We have had numerous community donations to help make this project happen without increasing property taxes and if the City would consider granting \$100,000 from the American Rescue Plan towards these two efforts, we are certain many residents will receive life-changing parks and recreation benefits from your support to make the Martens Center and Human Kinetics Park a world class place to recreate, reduce stress, compete, learn, grow, and play in an underserved region of our community.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please reach out to me.

Best Regards,



Joe DeLuce, CPRP
Executive Director

CC:

County Board Members: Jacob Paul, Jim Goss, Jodi Wolken, Diane Michaels, Aaron Esry, Stanley C. Harper, Brad Passalacqua, Jim McGuire, Jordan Humphrey, Leah Taylor, Samantha Carter, Jenny Lokshin, Eric Thorsland, Stephanie Fortado, Emily Rodriguez, Jennifer Straub, Steve Summers, Chris Stohr, Mary King, Titianna Ammons, and Lorraine Cowart

County Executive: Darlene Kloeppel

Champaign Park District
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Joseph C. DeLuce, *Executive Director*



CHAMPAIGN COUNTY
REGIONAL PLANNING
COMMISSION

American Rescue Plan Act

Early Childhood Education Center One-Time Funding Request

Executive Summary

This document represents a formal proposal from the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission (RPC) to the Champaign County Board for a portion of American Rescue Plan Act funding to be allocated toward the construction/purchase of an early childhood facility. The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 will provide resources to Champaign County in the estimated amount of \$40,667,890 for the period March 1, 2021 – December 31, 2024. The first distribution is expected within 90 days or June 1, 2021.

This proposal primarily focuses on the facility needs of the Champaign County Head Start/Early Childhood program currently operated by the RPC. Even though the RPC has been the recipient of millions in COVID relief funding from the federal and state governments, the funding received to date has been earmarked for specific programs and services and not intended for facility acquisition or improvements. It is important to set the context that while there is a need for additional facilities for the Champaign County Early Childhood program, the program itself has sustained financial losses due to COVID impeding the RPC's ability to finance facility acquisition or improvements. This proposal outlines the need for at least an additional facility which will be a long-term investment in Champaign County children and families funded primarily through the American Rescue Program Act.

Background

Champaign County Regional Planning Commission's (RPC) Early Childhood Education program will need to relocate five of its classrooms currently located within Unit 4 School District's Champaign Early Childhood Center on North Neil street. RPC has provided early childhood education services from that location under a 20-year lease agreement with Unit 4 which will terminate in the Spring of 2023.

The RPC Early Childhood Education program has also operated six preschool classes out of leased space from the Village of Savoy for more than 25 years. The challenge with the location in Savoy is that many of the families served at that location do not reside in Savoy. Consequently, the children who attend classes in Savoy must be transported from Champaign and other parts of the county which has proven to be cost prohibitive.

Over the last few years, RPC has explored facility options within the community which would accommodate the five classrooms that would be relocated from the Neil street location and the six classrooms from Savoy.

Proposal

As demographics of the families served by RPC's Head Start program continue to shift, it is incumbent upon the RPC to be more strategic in the establishment of its center-based locations so that they are much closer to where the families it serves reside. To that end, RPC is proposing the development of additional classroom space by asking the Champaign County Board to apportion \$5.9 million of the ARPA funding to develop an existing empty lot which is adjacent to the building it currently leases from the Illinois Community Action Development Corporation (ICADC) located on 103 S. Country Fair Drive in Champaign. Currently, federal and state funding support 14 year-round classrooms with programming for up to 10 hours/day to meet the needs of our families that are working or going to school. This facility is a one-story school/office building on a four-acre site.

Champaign County Regional Planning Commission

1776 E. Washington St. Urbana, IL 61802

P 217.328.3313 F 217.328.2426

TTY 217.384.3862 CCRPC.ORG



CHAMPAIGN COUNTY
REGIONAL PLANNING
COMMISSION

This 30-year-old, 20,217 square foot facility is in excellent condition and underwent a complete interior remodel in 2017 and 2019 to accommodate a new preschool, with the creation of six infant-toddler and eight preschool classroom inclusive of child-size restrooms, a full commercial grade kitchen, expansive interior play space, automated daycare tracking and camera systems, solarium, conference rooms, laundry, offices, adult restrooms, and parking provided on concrete and asphalt-surfaced lots.

Cost Estimate and Documentation of Need

The following are the details for the proposed site with cost estimates:

In direct response to the pandemic and the associated increase in demand for quality early childhood educational services for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, we request review of a proposal for the construction of a new center utilizing ARPA stimulus funds combined with existing economic development funds for a total one-time cost of \$6.4M for a one-story 20,217 SF school/office building on 1.17 acres. ARPA funds in the amount of \$5.9M would be leveraged with Commission economic development funds in the amount of \$500K. These funds would be utilized to serve at-risk, low-income children and families with a direct benefit for the next 40 years. After an exhaustive search of existing childcare facilities, we suggest creation of a fully integrated center connected to our existing Champaign West Early Childhood Center located at 103 S. Country Fair Drive.

Our lease with Unit 4 for five classrooms and common areas at the Neil Street location is expiring. This location currently serves 64 children and families. Our Savoy location with six classrooms and common areas is located within an 85-year-old former elementary school that serves 108 children. The infrastructure at the Savoy location is aging, in disrepair, and requires busing children from our high poverty areas in north and west Champaign at a cost of over \$250K per year. Combining these children into one easily accessible location in West Champaign would eliminate the need for extensive busing and would allow us to serve an additional 50 low-income children and their families. The total number of children ages 0 to 5 at this new location would be 222. This one-time investment will serve our community and positively impact over 8,000 families currently in poverty over the next 40 years.

The Head Start and Early Head Start grants, along w/state funding for Preschool for All and subsidy reimbursements for full day care will cover all annual operating expenses including utilities, repair and maintenance, insurance, lawn care, snow removal and security. Extensive budgetary projections indicate that current and future revenue streams are adequate to operationally support this facility over the long-term. No further financial commitment from the County would be required. Head Start recently celebrated its 56th anniversary with defined academic outcomes and high-performance standards set for its grantees. The Commission has managed the Head Start and Early Head Start grants for over 25 years leveraging state funds to support the needs of our families working or attending school with a quality educational programming and childcare for up to 10 hours per day.

The planned Early Childhood Center will provide accessible and fully equipped classrooms inclusive of child-sized restrooms, a full commercial grade kitchen, expansion interior play space, automated daycare tracking and video camera systems, wet sprinkler system, conference rooms, laundry, adult restrooms, outdoor play space and parking provided on concrete and asphalt-surfaced lots.

This facility will employ 53 staff including a site manager, two assistant site managers, clerk, two cooks, four family advocates, 28 teachers, 14 teacher aides, and a social-emotional skills coach.

Champaign County Regional Planning Commission

1776 E. Washington St. Urbana, IL 61802
P 217.328.3313 F 217.328.2426
TTY 217.384.3862 CCRPC.ORG

DATE: May 25, 2021
TO: Champaign County Board
FROM: Lynn Canfield, ED, Champaign County Mental Health Board
SUBJECT: **Written Input #1: Premium Pay** to Direct Support Professionals and Social Service Workers

Page 8 of the Interim Final Rule states that “payments from the Fiscal Recovery Funds may also be used... to offer premium pay to **essential workers**, in recognition of their sacrifices over the last year.” Direct support professionals (DSPs) and other frontline workers in the local human services organizations are described in NACo and US Treasury webinars as such essential workers. For people with I/DD, the pandemic took a deeply flawed state system and added danger for people served, their families, and those providing services. My initial proposal used an annual bonus amount based on data related to the State of Illinois’ Ligas Consent Decree and subsequent federal findings. Between 150 and 170 DSPs work with County residents who have I/DD. Annual ‘premium pay’ to these essential workers could be a one-time payment of \$3,120 to each who worked a 12-month period during the pandemic, with highest total cost of \$530,400. ARP premium pay has caps much more generous than these, up to \$13/hr in addition to wages, with total annual cap \$25,000 (page 48.) The workforce crisis in all social services warrants serious consideration of such reward payments to all direct DD and behavioral health professionals in the County, while the State considers appropriations to increase annual pay sufficiently and permanently. This solution is consistent with our most recent community needs assessment and strategic plans; the CCMHB/CCDDB staff could collect information regarding these essential workers and forward to the County for action.

DATE: May 25, 2021
TO: Champaign County Board
FROM: Lynn Canfield, ED, Champaign County Mental Health Board
SUBJECT: **Written Input #2: Behavioral Healthcare**

The US Treasury’s ARP coordinator Jacob Leibenluft describes this funding as “very importantly” applicable to **behavioral health services**. Behavioral healthcare is identified within the public health response to be supported, and in recognition of the disparate impacts of COVID, the guidance also has a strong equity focus. The unprecedented spike in mental health/addiction concerns turned the crisis of early 2020 into another ongoing pandemic, with profound personal and community economic impacts. Treatment for these needs is essential to community recovery.

During annual solicitation of funding requests from non-profit organizations offering behavioral health services, the CCMHB received many applications which address this explosion of mental health, addiction, and related needs. Various proposals address crisis response, children and youth, resilience-building, violence interruption and postvention, and more, but the Board’s revenue has not grown with the needs, making it impossible to fund several important new and expanded programs. ARP funding could support additional behavioral healthcare services for those most negatively impacted by COVID-19, including people with low income and people of color. Pages 11 and 19-20 of the Interim Final Rule set the stage for this use, naming non-profits in particular; Page 14 details mental health impacts; and Page 15 notes exacerbation of health inequities. For this solution, which is consistent with our 2018 community needs assessment and the 2020 Champaign County IPlan and assessment, the CCMHB has contracting processes in place appropriate to the types of service and provider, and monitoring and reporting requirements which capture utilization, outcomes, and financial accountability.

DATE: May 25, 2021
TO: Champaign County Board
FROM: Lynn Canfield, ED, Champaign County Mental Health Board
SUBJECT: **Written Input #3: Community Violence Intervention and Postvention**

On pages 22-23 of the Interim Final Rule, “Evidence-based **community violence intervention** programs to prevent violence or mitigate the increase in violence during the pandemic” would be eligible in qualified census tracts and broader communities, as long as there is support for the “determination that the pandemic resulted in disproportionate public health or economic outcomes to the specific populations, households, or geographic areas to be served.” This is in recognition that “pre-existing social vulnerabilities” caused greater health disparities during the pandemic, so that “services to address health disparities are presumed to be responsive to the public health impacts of the pandemic.” An eligible use of ARP funds appears to be broader implementation of trauma-informed care which can support people affected by gun violence and domestic violence and disrupt these cycles of violence. As all are aware, rates of violence have risen dramatically, and continue to rise, here and across the country. Recovery from the pandemic calls for expansion of trauma-informed care and violence interruption/intervention. Substantial additional funds are necessary to scale up efforts in each of these areas, beyond projects currently funded by the CCMHB. For this solution, which is consistent with our 2018 community needs assessment and the 2020 Champaign County IPlan and needs assessment, the CCMHB could build on current contracts or develop an RFP.

DATE: May 25, 2021
TO: Champaign County Board
FROM: Lynn Canfield, ED, Champaign County Mental Health Board
SUBJECT: Written Input #4: Crisis Co-Response and Stabilization

Two projects long identified as important to local government and community members involve crisis intervention. Behavioral health workforce shortage and high total cost of full projects are persistent barriers. Partnerships exist among public and private entities, which could oversee and benefit from these projects. During the pandemic, crisis response became more difficult to implement. For a county-wide **mobile crisis co-response** program (mental health professionals with law enforcement) would cost between \$2m and \$3m annually. A short-term local effort could bridge us to 2022, when the federal government will launch a national crisis system and require states to implement fuller crisis supports. Similarly, a **crisis center/triage center/diversion center**, could be established and funded. Total budgets for successful centers elsewhere in Illinois are \$3.5m and greater; a design which captures Champaign County's current strengths, including existing collaborations, may have a different cost. Whether directly or indirectly involved, the CCMHB shares an interest and has access to information about best practices and successful similar projects in other communities. For this solution, which is consistent with our community needs assessment, three-year plan, and current allocation priorities, the CCMHB has planning, contracting, and monitoring processes in place but has not had capacity to be the sole funder of these projects due to cost and the need for shared oversight.

DATE: May 25, 2021
TO: Champaign County Board
FROM: Lynn Canfield, ED, Champaign County Mental Health Board
SUBJECT: **Written Input #5: Housing and Neighborhoods**

Page 38 of the IFR identifies uses related to “Building Stronger Communities through Investments in **Housing and Neighborhoods**” with recognition that COVID-19’s greatest economic impacts tend to be in lower-income neighborhoods with high unemployment, limited opportunities, and housing insecurity. Eligible services that could “alleviate the immediate economic impacts” while addressing the contributing factors include: supportive housing; affordable housing development to increase affordable, high quality units; and housing vouchers, residential counseling, or housing navigation assistance. Some of these services are available in Champaign County but could be scaled up and gaps filled. There may be limits to the scope of eligible use (general infrastructure, e.g.), but this community has had a difficult time maintaining adequate capacity for permanent supportive housing and emergency shelter, and data demonstrated this local need prior to the pandemic. In 2019, Champaign County’s poverty rate of 19.9% was the fifth highest in the state (IL poverty rate was 11.4%), and the child poverty rate of 18.8% here also higher than the 15.6% rate for Illinois. The American Academy of Pediatrics published a study showing that the majority of homeless children’s behavioral health issues were resolved by simply acquiring housing.

To the Champaign County Board:

I write to support requests made by Lynn Canfield, Executive Director, Champaign County Mental Health and Disabilities Boards, for American Rescue Plan funds.

As a Mental Health Board member, former Disabilities Board member, and parent of an adult son with severe mental and physical disabilities, I can attest to the need for additional funds to support our citizens with mental health issues, substance abuse issues, and/or intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Request #1:

It is said that the next pandemic will be a mental health pandemic. On the Mental Health Board, I have seen a rise in requests for funding to help those who have become even more at risk due to COVID. This year, requests from local agencies supersede our projected funds by nearly \$800,000. Without additional funds, we will have to underfund established agencies and refuse funding to those applying to us for the first time.

Request #2:

Our son, who requires 24-hour attention, lived at home for 28 years. Now he is fortunate to receive day programming and housing from a local agency. The Direct Support staff who make his independent life possible are woefully underpaid. He forms bonds with his caregivers only to see them disappear, one after another, in search of a living wage. This is wrenching for him. Also, low workforce numbers put his health and safety at risk. I ask that DSPs be given a lump-sum payment as described in Lynn Canfield's memo.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine Fowler Palencia

From: [Rappaport, Julian](#)
To: [Lynn Canfield](#)
Subject: FW: Memo Re: County Board May 25 Study Session
Date: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 11:14:38 AM

FYI

From: Julian Rappaport <rappapor@illinois.edu>
Date: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 at 11:06 AM
To: "mrobinson@co.champaign.il.us" <mrobinson@co.champaign.il.us>
Subject: Memo Re: County Board May 25 Study Session

TO: Champaign County Board
RE: Use of American Rescue Plan Act Funds
FROM: Julian Rappaport
Member, County Mental Health Board

This memo suggests that the Champaign County Board work closely with its County Mental Health Board as it makes decisions concerning the use of American Rescue Plan Act funds.

It is widely understood that the pandemic has greatly increased mental health stress on ordinary people. For Champaign County residents who already live with stressful life circumstances the increased demands of coping for themselves, their children, and their neighbors is overwhelming. These mental health needs have quickly translated into a demand for human services that exceeds existing capacity. In response to the increased demand for help from a wide array of citizens, current and would-be local service providers have made requests to the County Mental Health Board for funding assistance that far exceeds available dollars. Each of these requests have already been closely evaluated by the Mental Health Board. It would make sense for the County Board, in considering how to best use the American Rescue Plan Act funds, to collaborate with the County Mental Health Board. This collaboration would assure consideration of needs expressed by a wide representation of County citizens.