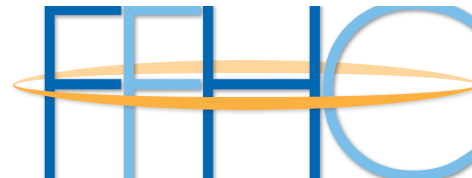




Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law

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Fathers Families & Healthy Communities

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Needy Children and Parents to Receive Larger Share of Child Support in Illinois

Rauner Signs Child Support “Pass Through” Bill into Law

On Friday, August 26th, Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner signed [SB 2340](#) into law. Sponsored by State Senator Kimberly Lightford (D-Westchester) and State Representative Litesa Wallace (D-Rockford), the bill will increase the amount of child support turned over from the state to families who receive cash assistance under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.

“This will make a huge difference in the lives of some of the poorest families in Illinois,” said Margaret Stapleton, Director of Community Justice at the Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law. “The incomes of TANF families are often extremely low, even after they have received assistance. This will substantially help many parents better provide for their children.”

Under federal law, TANF recipients must assign their right to receive child support payments over to the government as a condition of receiving assistance. Child support is then collected by the state and used to reimburse both the federal and state government for the cash assistance paid to custodial parents. While they are not required to do so, states are able to let a portion of the child support “pass through” to TANF families. The child support payment is not counted as income when calculating their TANF grant.

Illinois currently allows up to \$50 to pass through to TANF families. SB 2340 will increase the maximum to \$100 for one child and \$200 for two or more—both the caps set by federal law.

In addition to bolstering the economic security of needy families, the bill will also have a positive impact on the relationship between non-custodial parents and children.

“This legislation is a win-win for children, mothers, and fathers,” said Dr. Kirk E. Harris, CEO and Co-Designer of Fathers, Families and Healthy Communities (FFHC). “Passing through more of the child support that they pay lets non-custodial parents, who are typically fathers, see that their contributions make a much more significant and positive difference in their children’s well-being. This supports the father’s efforts to be responsible and committed to the ongoing care and support of their child.”

The Shriver Center and FFHC led advocacy for passage of SB 2340 for several years. The bill also received strong support from various other child and family advocacy organizations, including Illinois Action for Children, EverThrive Illinois, The Ounce of Prevention Fund, and Voices for Illinois Children. It passed both the House and the Senate in May, and will take effect on January 1, 2017.

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The Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law provides national leadership in advancing laws and policies that secure justice to improve the lives and opportunities of people living in poverty. We specialize in practical solutions. We advocate for and serve clients directly, while also building the capacity of the nation's legal aid providers to advance justice and opportunity for their clients.

Fathers, Families, and Healthy Communities (FFHC) works to engage fathers so that they can provide a host of developmental supports for their children, while being active as positive co-equal parents. FFHC breaks new ground by using an "asset-based" community-based collaborative approach designed to encourage the scalability and sustainability of father engagement and involvement activities, while also promoting promising practices associated with father engagement and family strengthening.

<http://www.ffhc.org/>