



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
BRUCE RAUNER

For Immediate Release
Friday, October 07, 2016

Contact
Catherine Kelly
Catherine.Kelly@illinois.gov

State of Illinois Welcomes Children Fleeing Hurricane Matthew's Path

Heartland Alliance to provide temporary home to the most vulnerable

CHICAGO - The state of Illinois is providing assistance to the federal government and the state of Florida by welcoming some of the most vulnerable victims of Hurricane Matthew.

Approximately 75 children, unaccompanied minors fleeing poverty, hunger and violence from their homelands in Central America, will be arriving in Illinois from Florida following their emergency evacuation to escape the destruction of Hurricane Matthew.

"We are grateful that the state of Illinois, through the hard work of Heartland Alliance, can offer these young children a temporary, safe home. It is important that in a time of crisis we all remember to offer a helping hand," Governor Rauner said. "Our thoughts are with those in the storm's path. We are hoping for as little destruction as possible and are evaluating every way Illinois can further help our fellow states."

"This is a great opportunity for Illinois to help in a time of crisis in the lives of children," said Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Director George Sheldon. "These children are seeking refuge in this country out of desperation to leave behind the dangerous conditions they faced in Central America, so we are grateful that Heartland Alliance has stepped forward to provide temporary space for them until they can safely return to Florida."

For the next 30 days, these children will remain under the auspices of Heartland Alliance until they can safely return to Florida.

"We are thankful that the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services granted us a temporary variance so that we were able to take in these children," says Susan Trudeau of Heartland Alliance. "When we all pull together, great things happen."

Heartland Alliance is the leading anti-poverty organization in the Midwest. Through a holistic continuum of programs (in the realms of housing, healthcare, jobs, and justice), Heartland Alliance seeks to address the root causes of poverty and danger, generate social change, and inspire people to build better lives not only for themselves but for their communities. They offer support to refugees, migrants, victims of trafficking and other vulnerable populations facing discrimination or violence. To learn more visit: www.heartlandalliance.org.

###