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September 7, 2012

The Honorable Pat J. Quinn
Governor, State of Illinois
100 W. Randolph Street
Suite 16-100
Chicago, IL 60601

Dear Governor Quinn:

The Civic Federation supports the Budgeting for Results Commission and its efforts to develop new ways for State government to more effectively manage its resources.

The goal of Budgeting for Results is to initiate a budget process that assesses available revenues, prioritizes the desired results of government spending, decides which activities can best achieve these results and then allocates available dollars to the most significant programs and activities. The Federation was encouraged by the extensive list of budget reform recommendations in the Commission's first annual report published last year and looks forward to the State pursuing and building on those goals.

Now more than ever it is important that the State establish ongoing performance measures to judge the effectiveness of programs and determine objectively which activities are working well and which are not successful. Establishing such metrics through the Budgeting for Results process can benefit both government officials and service providers. Optimally, providers will receive the funding they deserve for successful programs and officials will be better able to resist political pressure to support programs that are not working.

Transforming the State's budgeting process is a difficult task that will take years to complete. It requires a sustained effort, particularly by the executive branch of State government, whose staff must consistently produce and support key performance measures. The Civic Federation applauds the Governor's Office and the General Assembly – especially the leadership of Sen. Dan Kotowski – for continuing to pursue this important budget reform.

Budgeting for Results is not a panacea for the State's financial problems. Painful choices will remain about the best use of the State's available resources. However, we believe that an ongoing commitment to Budgeting for Results will provide elected officials with the proper framework to best serve the residents of Illinois.

Sincerely,

Laurence Msall
President
The Civic Federation

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