

IPS  
Illinois Psychiatric Society  
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Chicago, Illinois 60611  
312/224-2601

A District Branch of the  
American Psychiatric Association

The Honorable Patrick Quinn  
Governor of Illinois  
207 Statehouse  
Springfield, IL 62706

June 5, 2009

Dear Governor Quinn:

I am writing on behalf of the Illinois Psychiatric Society (IPS), a state-wide organization of over 1100 psychiatrists. We would appreciate it if you would sign SB 231 into law. Currently, when offenders, with Medicaid benefits, enter prison or jail those benefits are terminated. Upon discharge, the ex-offenders must reapply for Medicaid, a process which can take at least 3 months. Without access to psychiatric medications and treatment, ex-offenders with mental illness decompensate and ultimately return to the behaviors that landed them in prison originally.

Under SB 231, Medicaid benefits would be suspended upon an offender's entry into prison/jail and would be reinstated upon discharge allowing an ex-offender access to medication and treatment immediately upon release. In other states where this change has been made, prison/jail recidivism rates for patients with mental illness have been decreased. Thus, this bill is cost effective as it helps divert ex-offenders from prison/jail as well as expensive emergency room visits.

If you, or your staff, desire any further information about this initiative, please do not hesitate to contact me at 312-245-9500, or through the office of the Illinois Psychiatric Society at 312-224-2601. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Lisa Rone, M.D.  
President, Illinois Psychiatric Society

Cc: John Potts, Illinois Strategies  
Senator Kwame Raoul