



April 1, 2020

Governor JB Pritzker
207 State House
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Governor Pritzker:

I write this letter in support of the many concerned foster parents, as well as the at-risk youth I represent in the 64th House District in light of the various ongoing measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

First, regarding the transition of our youth in care from traditional Medicaid to Medicaid managed care. While I am glad you have again taken action to delay the transition, I believe the current crisis illustrates an even greater need to delay the transition until next year to address the concerns expressed by child welfare experts and foster parents about the inadequacy of the YouthCare provider network. Serious concerns existed with the provider network's ability to meet the specialized care needs for these children before the COVID-19 pandemic and those concerns will undoubtedly be exacerbated by this crisis.

Second, I urge you to institute increased home safety inspections for our at-risk youth who have had previous contact with the Department of Children and Family Services. With school and daycare closures and your recent action to extend these closures to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, child welfare and law enforcement experts have expressed serious concerns that incidents of abuse will increase during this stressful period. While I understand the necessity of measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19, we must also take all appropriate action to protect these children.

As I am sure you would agree, the health and well-being of our youth in care and at-risk youth who are in the charge of the Department of Children and Family Services must be a top priority as we navigate the unprecedented circumstances surrounding COVID-19.

I stand ready to work with your administration and, if legislative action is necessary, my colleagues in the legislature to ensure the health and well-being of these children is protected.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Weber". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Tom Weber
State Representative - 64th District

cc: Marc D. Smith, Acting Director, Department of Children and Family Services
Theresa Eagleson, Director, Department of Healthcare and Family Services