

STATE OF ILLINOIS



Proclamation

WHEREAS, the social work profession for decades has been dedicated to improving human well-being and enhancing the basic needs of all people, especially the most vulnerable among us; and,

WHEREAS, this year's Social Work Month theme, "Social Workers Are Essential," embodies the heroic contributions of the social work profession to our state, including the work social workers have done to heal our state during these times of pandemic, racial unrest, economic uncertainty and political divisiveness; and,

WHEREAS, social workers have always been present in times of crisis, helping people overcome issues such as death and grief and helping communities recover from natural disasters such as fires, hurricanes, and earthquakes; and,

WHEREAS, social workers have helped this nation live up to its values by successfully advocating for equal rights for all people, no matter their race, sexual identity, gender, gender expression, culture, or religion; and,

WHEREAS, the social work profession is one of the fastest growing professions in the United States, with nearly 800,000 people expected to be employed as social workers by 2028, with 30,500 in Illinois alone; and,

WHEREAS, social workers work in all parts of our society to empower people to live to their fullest potential; and,

WHEREAS, school social workers have worked with families and schools throughout the pandemic to ensure students reach their full academic and personal potential; and,

WHEREAS, social workers play a crucial role in our state's health care system and have been key in Illinois' response to COVID-19 by helping individuals, families, and communities cope with the pandemic; and,

WHEREAS, for generations, social workers have advocated for positive changes that have made our society a better place to live, including urging policymakers to adopt the minimum wage, improve workplace safety, and enact social safety net programs that help ameliorate hunger, homelessness, and poverty; and,

WHEREAS, social workers are one of the largest groups of mental health care providers in Illinois, and work daily to help people—whether in person or remotely—overcome substance use disorders and mental illnesses such as depression and anxiety; and,

WHEREAS, social workers will continue to stand ready to assist our state in overcoming present and future challenges, including pushing for racial equity, ending gun violence, improving health care and mental health care for all, ensuring affordable housing, protecting our youth in care, and urging lawmakers to adopt a budget that makes our most vulnerable the priority;

THEREFORE, I, JB Pritzker, Governor of the State of Illinois, do hereby proclaim March 2021 as **Social Work Month** in Illinois and call upon all citizens to join the National Association of Social Workers, Illinois Chapter in celebration and support of the social work profession.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Illinois to be affixed.

Done at the Capitol in the City of Springfield,
this FOURTH *day of* FEBRUARY, *in*
the Year of Our Lord, two thousand and
TWENTY-ONE, *and of the State of Illinois,*
two hundred and THIRD.



Deese White
SECRETARY OF STATE

JB Pritzker
GOVERNOR