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Proposed \$50 Million Investment Would Make Chicago Nation's Largest Publicly Funded Guaranteed Income Program

*National Experts Taut Guaranteed Income Success at Committee
on Economic, Capital, and Technology Development Hearing*

CHICAGO, IL --The City of Chicago's Committee on Economic, Capital and Technology Development offered a bold financial pilot for a Guaranteed Basic Income today. The \$50 million investment proposed would make Chicago home to the nation's largest publicly funded guaranteed income program.

"I not only believe in the power of this pilot program because of the economic growth it will bring, it is personal to me. At the age of eight when I lost my father, this kind of assistance would have been life changing for my single mother raising two boys," **said Chairman Gilbert Villegas**. "Today we are asking that less than 2% of the estimated \$1.9 billion being allocated to the City of Chicago from the American Rescue Plan be used to support Chicago's most vulnerable residents. Help is on the way and we need to act with a sense of urgency to roll out the Chicago Rescue Plan."

The meeting commenced with the passage of [a resolution, filed February 26, 2021](#) by Chairman Gilbert Villegas, Alderwoman Maria Hadden, and Alderwoman Sophia King calling for the Hearing. Several experts from across the nation provided testimony on their current program and findings, in addition to a personal testimony of a local Chicagoan who received prior payments.

"At the beginning of the pandemic, the days were very, very dark for my household; my only goal was survival," said **Cheryse Singleton-Nobles a foster parent and day care provider on Chicago's South Side**, "A cash transfer from LIFT-Chicago gave us instant relief. I was able to buy food, soap, toothpaste and dishwashing liquid. Now, when the money comes every three months, I can catch up with my bills, prevent my light and gas from being cut off, keep gas in the car, and start to save towards debt-free living."

As the COVID-19 Pandemic has exacerbated the vulnerabilities of people and jobs across this Nation. Congress is depending upon local governments to help their communities rise above this economic crisis, the proposed guaranteed income program would reduce income volatility,

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pay debts or emergency bills, and increase overall quality of life with less than 2% of the estimated total \$1.9 Billion being allocated to the City of Chicago in the American Rescue Plan.

“We are determined to set an agenda to bring relief to Chicagoans. With the passage of the stimulus bill, we have the opportunity to put money back into our constituents pockets and change their lives. We must bring a guaranteed income to Chicago,” **said Alderwoman Maria Hadden.**

“City leaders across the nation are realizing that the best way to use public funds efficiently is to invest directly in people. Use Stockton as proof. [Research](#) released this month on Stockton’s guaranteed income experiment found cash payments dramatically reduced income volatility, while also improving job prospects, positively impacting mental health, and stabilizing the surrounding community,” **said Michael Tubbs, former Mayor of Stockton and the founder of Mayors for a Guaranteed Income.**

While the exact structure of the program has not yet been formally decided or determined, a guaranteed income program would distribute hundreds of dollars in monthly direct cash payments to hundreds-- potentially thousands-- of Chicago families. The momentum in Chicago matches a push for guaranteed income in cities across the country.

“Simply put - Cash is King. And Chicago families and the economy will benefit from the economic boost and stability a guaranteed income would give our most vulnerable residents,” **said Alderwoman Sophia King.**

The impact of this Hearing was quickly felt as Aldermen Curtis, Vasquez, M. Rodriguez, Lopez, Sadlowski-Garza, Cappleman, Taylor, Sigcho-Lopez, Mitts, Hairston, Waguespack, Martin, Moore, Cardona, Reboyras, and Rodriguez-Sanchez committed to joining as co-sponsors before adjournment. The Hearing was concluded with Chairman Villegas stating he is working on a Guaranteed Basic Income Ordinance with the hope that the Mayor’s Office partners to issue an executive order given the current crucial need.

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[Economic Security for Illinois](#) is a non-partisan non-profit advocating for bold policy solutions that work for working people. We promote ideas that will put money in people's pockets.