

March 21, 2022

Re: Support for Equip for Equality

Dear Governor Pritzker,

On behalf of Howard Brown Health, I am writing to express my strong support that the Client Assistance Program (CAP) be re-designated to Equip for Equality. Howard Brown Health was founded in 1974 and is now one of the nation's largest lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) organizations. Rooted in LGBTQ+ liberation, Howard Brown Health provides affirming healthcare and mobilizes for social justice. We envision a future where healthcare and transformative social policies actualize human rights and equity for all. With an annual budget of over \$145 million, the agency serves more than 40,000 adults and youth in its diverse health and social service delivery system focused around seven major programmatic divisions: primary medical care, behavioral health, research, HIV/STI prevention, youth services, elder services, and community initiatives.

The role of CAP is to serve as an independent legal advocate for applicants and customers of the state rehabilitation system. We support the redesignation to Equip for Equality for the following reasons:

- **Congress has shown a clear intent that CAP be an independent legal advocate for individuals seeking and receiving rehabilitation services.** In Illinois, CAP is currently administered by Division of Rehabilitation Services in the Department of Human Services.
- The only reason that Illinois and five other states still house CAP inside the Division of Rehabilitation Services is that Congress agreed to "grandfather" them when it passed the provisions of the Rehab Act establishing CAP in every state.
- **Equip for Equality already has a wealth of experience administering seven of the eight federally mandated legal advocacy programs for people with disabilities – all except CAP.**

For all of these reasons, **we strongly urge you to re-designate CAP to Equip for Equality.**

Sincerely,



David Ernesto Munar
President & CEO