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## **GOV. QUINN SIGNS JUVENILE JUSTICE REFORM LEGISLATION** *COST EFFECTIVENESS OF REDEPLOY ILLINOIS GAINS RECOGNITION*

CHICAGO – Redeploy Illinois, a pilot program recognized for diverting some 400 youths from expensive incarceration in state facilities, has been made a permanent state program and given the opportunity to reach juveniles statewide.

Gov. Pat Quinn on Tuesday signed Senate Bill 1013, which removes the “pilot status” of Redeploy Illinois and permits the state to offer the program beyond the pilot counties and make it more accessible by 70 less populated counties previously excluded because they have low numbers of delinquent youth.

Counties that don’t have the benefit of a Redeploy Illinois pilot program have no financial incentive to take responsibility for the punishment and rehabilitation of juveniles. The result is a perverse system that encourages county judges to send youths away to expensive juvenile prisons where the state picks up the cost of housing, feeding, and sometimes educating each juvenile. The juvenile prisons in Illinois have proven to be ineffective in rehabilitating youth, who too often resume their bad behavior on return to their communities.

Redeploy Illinois changes the incentives and offers counties money to treat youths in their home communities at far less expense and with greater success. In exchange, the participating counties agree to reduce the number of youths sent to state facilities by 25 percent or face a fine.

“By giving counties a financial incentive to keep non-violent youth out of expensive state facilities, Redeploy Illinois has shown the potential to save the state millions of dollars and at the same time help turn around the lives of troubled teens,” said Paula Wolff, Senior Executive of Chicago Metropolis 2020. “Redeploy Illinois demonstrates that dollars and lives are saved when juveniles are held accountable for their actions and rehabilitated in their home communities.”

Chicago Metropolis 2020, a business-based civic organization, and the Juvenile Justice Initiative (JJI), a statewide coalition promoting juvenile justice reforms, were early advocates of Redeploy Illinois, which was created by legislation in 2003.

“Redeploy Illinois is a great example of a fair and rational juvenile justice policy,” said Betsy Clarke, President of JJI. “By reaching young people in their home communities with social services and oversight, we give them a better chance of succeeding later in life. Redeploy Illinois holds them accountable for their crimes, but it also can make it less likely they will commit future crimes.

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“Not only is it less expensive, but Redeploy Illinois communities are finding that juveniles in the program are far less likely to commit an offense that sends them back into the juvenile justice system,” Clarke said. “That’s a positive development for the youth and for the safety of our communities.”

During the first three years of Redeploy Illinois, the four pilot sites sent approximately 400 fewer youths to the Department of Juvenile Justice, a reduction of 51 percent in these sites. That reduction is the equivalent of \$18.7 million in “cost avoidance” to the state, according to the Department of Human Services. The 2008 Redeploy Illinois annual report can be found at this link: [http://www.jjustice.org/pdf/Redeploy Legislative Report 11 08.pdf](http://www.jjustice.org/pdf/Redeploy%20Legislative%20Report%2011%2008.pdf).

The four initial pilot sites are Macon County, Peoria County, St. Clair County and the Second Judicial Circuit, which includes 12 counties in southeastern Illinois.

Five new Redeploy Illinois sites were added this year in Kankakee County, Lee County, Madison County, McLean County and the counties of Montgomery, Christian and Marion in the Fourth Judicial Circuit. Planning also has begun for a Redeploy Illinois program in Cook County.

On average, state government spends more than \$70,000 on each youth sent to a facility operated by the Department of Juvenile Justice. The cost of providing services locally to youth in Redeploy Illinois ranges from \$2,500 to \$9,500 per youth.

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#### About Chicago Metropolis 2020

Chicago Metropolis 2020 is a nonprofit civic organization created in 1999 by The Commercial Club of Chicago to promote long-term planning, better regional cooperation, and smart investments in the Chicago region and its people.

*On the Web:* <http://www.chicagometropolis2020.org>