

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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More Than Half Of Illinois Counties Facing Threats To Social And Economic Well-Being

67 out of 102 Illinois counties are on Heartland Alliance's Poverty Watch or Warning lists

CHICAGO, IL.—New data from the Social IMPACT Research Center at Heartland Alliance show that Illinois residents are faring worse on poverty, unemployment, teen birth, and high school graduation rates. The new analysis found that **67 out of 102 Illinois counties are on either the Poverty Watch or the Poverty Warning lists**, which are created using Heartland Alliance's County Well-Being Index. This is an increase from last year, when 52 out of 102 Illinois counties were on the Poverty Watch or Poverty Warning lists.

"The rise in the number of counties on the Poverty Watch and Warning lists only confirms what we at Heartland Alliance see every day: that Illinois communities need meaningful investments, economic opportunity, and policies that work to bring equity to all communities," said Heartland Alliance's Director of Research, Katie Buitrago. *"The data we released today can help people working to making change in their communities understand the conditions on-the-ground and make better decisions about how to move the needle on poverty."*

This newly released county and local data about poverty and well-being in Illinois are available in a interactive map at the [Social IMPACT Research Center's website](#).

[The County Well-Being Index](#), created by the Social IMPACT Research Center, highlights counties that are experiencing particularly negative conditions and trends on four key indicators: poverty, unemployment, teen births, and high school graduation. The counties are evaluated using a point system, **with a higher number of points indicating a worse score**. A county receives a point if its rate is worse than the state average and/or if it has worsened since the previous year, for a total of 8 possible points.

Counties on the Poverty Watch list have a score of 4 or 5 and need to be monitored by local leadership, while counties on the Poverty Warning list have a score of 6, 7, or 8 and need to initiate corrective action (such as adequately funding education, quality job creation, and human services).

In addition to the County Well-Being Index, the Social IMPACT Research Center released county, Chicago metro area, and Chicago community area-level data on a broad range of indicators related to poverty and well-being. These indicators on poverty, rent burden, employment, vacancy, and more, are displayed through interactive maps or dashboards. To demonstrate how the public, media, government entities,

and non-profit service providers can use the data to understand local needs and help combat poverty. IMPACT will host a [webinar](#) on **July 15th from 3:30 PM – 4:30 PM CDT**. [Register for the webinar](#).

Counties on the Poverty Warning list include:

- Bond
- Cass
- Ford
- Gallatin
- Greene
- Hancock
- Jackson
- Macoupin
- Peoria
- Pike
- Pope
- Union
- Wabash
- Wayne

Counties on the Poverty Watch list include:

- | | | |
|-------------|--------------|---------------|
| • Adams | • Jefferson | • Perry |
| • Alexander | • Jersey | • Pulaski |
| • Bureau | • Jo Daviess | • Putnam |
| • Calhoun | • Johnson | • Randolph |
| • Champaign | • Kankakee | • Richland |
| • Christian | • LaSalle | • Rock Island |
| • Clay | • Lawrence | • Saline |
| • Coles | • Lee | • Sangamon |
| • Crawford | • Livingston | • Schuyler |
| • DeKalb | • Macon | • Scott |
| • Edgar | • Madison | • St. Clair |
| • Edwards | • Marion | • Stark |
| • Fayette | • Marshall | • Stephenson |
| • Franklin | • McDonough | • Vermilion |
| • Fulton | • McLean | • Whiteside |
| • Hardin | • Mercer | • Williamson |
| • Iroquois | • Monroe | • Winnebago |
| • Jasper | • Morgan | |

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[Heartland Alliance for Human Needs and Human Rights](#) – Heartland Alliance, one of the world’s leading antipoverty organizations, works in communities in the U.S. and abroad to serve those who are homeless, living in poverty, or seeking safety. It provides a comprehensive array of services in the areas of health, housing, jobs and justice – and leads state and national policy efforts, which target lasting change for individuals and society.