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January 4, 2022

To: President Toni Preckwinkle, Chair John Daley and the Members of the Finance Committee, and Chief Financial Officer Ammar Rizki via email

re: Item 22-0637, Cook County American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Initiatives and Allocations, referred to the Finance Committee on December 16, 2021

Dear President Preckwinkle, Chair Daley and Members of the Finance Committee, and CFO Rizki:

The League of Women Voters of Cook County appreciates all the time, careful thought and analysis that has gone into the spending recommendations contained in the referenced item, as evidenced by the information provided at the December 16 Board meeting.

It is clear that you recognize the opportunity and the responsibility the County has to ensure that the ARPA funds are spent effectively. Specifying up front how program effectiveness will be measured would provide the County the ability to share the outcomes transparently with the public and assure them that the money is being used wisely. The results of these measurements can also provide a basis for making decisions as to how the ARPA funds will be spent in 2023 and 2024.

The plan should include up front for each funded program:

- (1) The specific outcomes the County is looking to achieve through the dollars expended, both near-term (by some point prior to the end of the 2022 fiscal year) and, if applicable, longer-term (when those long-term outcomes can be expected).
- (2) How the County plans to measure achievement of the hoped-for outcomes, including what data is to be provided, by whom, and how often.
- (3) Who will be analyzing the effectiveness of the dollars spent (what outside entities with expertise and/or what County departments).

In those cases where there are existing programs that are to be funded, an evaluation of the effectiveness of such programs, identifying the outcomes, measures and data used to evaluate the programs' effectiveness, and who has analyzed the effectiveness should also be provided prior to finalizing the grants.

We urge that similar information and analysis be provided for programs funded by the Equity Fund.

The monthly reports to the Board that the League has seen regarding the use of federal funds detail how the money has been spent. We look forward to seeing reports on the effectiveness of how the money has been spent.

Yours truly,
Cynthia Schilsky, President