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Members include Religious Leaders from the:

African Methodist Episcopal Church

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

American Baptist Churches of Metro Chicago

Armenian Orthodox Church

Baptist General Convention of Illinois

Baptist Ministers' Conference of Chicago and Vicinity

Chicago Board of Rabbis

Christian Church/ Disciples of Christ

Christian Methodist Episcopal Church

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

Church of God in Christ

Church of the Brethren

Council for Islamic Organizations

Episcopal Church (USA)

Evangelical Covenant Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Greek Orthodox Church

Orthodox Church in America

Pentecostal Assemblies of the World

Presbyterian Church (USA)

Reformed Church in America

Roman Catholic Church

Salvation Army

Serbian Orthodox Church

Ukrainian Orthodox Church

Unitarian Universalist Association

United Baptist State Convention

United Church of Christ

United Methodist Church

Catholic Theological Union

Chicago Theological Seminary

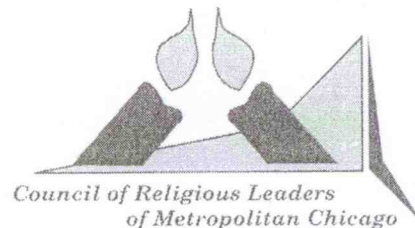
Lutheran School of Theology

McCormick Theological Seminary

Meadville-Lombard Theological School

Community Renewal Society

National Conference for Community and Justice of Chicago and Greater Illinois



October 1, 2007

The Honorable Rod Blagojevich
Governor, State of Illinois

Via Fax Transmission: 312-814-6183

Attn: Gerardo Cardenas

Dear Governor Blagojevich:

We are writing with great concern on behalf of the Council of Religious Leaders of Metropolitan Chicago. Members of the Council are chief leaders of Roman Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox and Oriental, Jewish and Islamic faith traditions and organizations.

We have learned that money to fund CEASE FIRE, THE CAMPAIGN TO STOP THE SHOOTING, has been stricken from the State's pending budget. The loss of funding for this outstanding community program will do great harm to many of the neighborhoods of our city and state.

Out of our faith commitments members of the Council joined with many other leaders and citizens in endorsing and encouraging CEASE FIRE from its inception. CEASE FIRE has reduced gun violence, random killings, and destructive gang behavior as no other program has. The shut down of CEASE FIRE has already been accompanied by a rise in killings. Its elimination would be deeply regrettable.

We urge your reconsideration of the funding of CEASE FIRE, THE CAMPAIGN TO STOP THE SHOOTING, and take action to restore the funding of this critically needed organization.

Sincerely yours

Rev. Claude Christopher
President

Rev. Paul Rutgers
Executive Director
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