IL RESET (ILLINOIS RESOURCING EMPLOYMENT SOCIAL ENTERPRISES TOGETHER)

PURPOSE

Illinois Resourcing Employment Social Enterprises Together (IL RESET) is a coalition advocating for capital, resources, and policy change to support the over 33 employment social enterprises in Illinois.

BACKGROUND

IL RESET is primarily composed of Illinois employment social enterprises (ESEs): evidence-based businesses with a social mission to provide jobs, income, and training to individuals overcoming high barriers to employment. Through paying jobs and supportive services—like financial literacy, housing, and counseling—ESEs help employees stabilize their lives, build skills, and develop a work history. When participants have the necessary tools and support to succeed, ESEs help their employees find, and keep, good jobs in the competitive market.

Evidence shows that ESEs effectively and efficiently promote economic, racial, and social equity. According to a study conducted by Mathematica Policy Research, ESEs offer a 123% return on investment ($2.23 benefit for every dollar invested) for taxpayers, government, philanthropy, and the people they serve. The ESEs in this study employed individuals with the following profile: 25% had never been employed, 70% had been convicted of a crime, and 85% had experienced housing instability. IL RESET coalition members meet the needs of the Illinois' most vulnerable populations; these entities are community-based and understand the unique needs of the local populations they serve.

CHALLENGE

ESEs can play a central role in ensuring an economy that works for everyone. Despite their proven ability to advance equitable economic opportunity, ESEs are often not included in government programs because they are structured as hybrids of business and social service organizations and incorporated as nonprofits and for profits.

SOLUTION

ESEs are engines of economic growth, equity, and mobility; they offer paid job training that prevents and ends homelessness and reduces recidivism. These businesses also promote equity and help address structural inequities by connecting individuals overcoming high barriers to employment to quality jobs that lead to long-term employment and compensation. By leveraging the ESE model and including these entities in workforce and small business packages, we can catalyze social change and build an economy in which *all* Illinoisans can find quality employment and cultivate self-sufficiency.

MEMBERS

IL RESET is composed of 23 organizations: A Safe Haven Foundation, Aspiritech, AutonomyWorks, Cara Collective, Chicago Cred, Chicago Jobs Council, Chicagoland Funder Workforce Alliance, Curt's Café, Defy Ventures, Genesys Works, Growing Home, HHPLift, i.c.stars, InnerCity Weightlifting, JobTrain Liftup, Mechanista, New Moms, North Lawndale Employment Network, Redefine Alliance, Revolution Institute, Revolution Workshop, YWCA Chicago.

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