



Proclamation

Presented this Fifteenth day of June 2020

WHEREAS, Maria Whelan devoted her career to improving the lives of children, families and communities in Illinois; and,

WHEREAS, Maria Whelan was a powerful voice for families and children who led Illinois Action for Children as President and CEO since 2001 with determination, love and devotion; and,

WHEREAS, Maria Whelan began her advocacy for children as a founder of the Carole Robertson Center, which continues to provide quality early childhood education on Chicago's West Side; and,

WHEREAS, Maria Whelan continued her advocacy work in her roles with the City of Chicago's Department of Human Services and the Chicago Community Trust before stepping into the leadership role with Illinois Action for Children; and,

WHEREAS, Maria Whelan recognized that providing for the success of children includes quality early childhood education, support for working families, access to childcare programs and other resources, and an end to the systems, policies and structures that perpetuate poverty;

WHEREAS, Maria Whelan was dedicated to building strong families and powerful communities where children matter most and,

WHEREAS, Maria Whelan was taken from us suddenly and unexpectedly on June 10, 2020; and,

WHEREAS, we join her family, friends and professional colleagues in mourning her loss and extend our deepest and most sincere sympathy; and,

WHEREAS, we recognize Maria Whelan's impact on early childhood development in Illinois and have every reason to believe her legacy will be the positive influence her work will have on the future of children in Illinois for many years to come;

THEREFORE, I, JB Pritzker, Governor of the State of Illinois, urge all citizens of Illinois to join me in mourning the loss of Maria Whelan and honoring her memory and her impressive legacy.



JB Pritzker
Governor, State of Illinois