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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
Wednesday, December 7, 2016

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## **Illinois Comptroller moves payments to the state's most vulnerable ahead of employee bonuses**

SPRINGFIELD – On her first day in office, Illinois Comptroller Susana Mendoza instructed her staff to issue a directive prioritizing social services, education, and public safety payments ahead of employee bonuses.

“I know first-hand how hard state employees work,” Mendoza said. “But I know there are group homes for people with disabilities; rape crisis centers; caregivers for the poor and elderly and other worthy programs likewise waiting to be paid by the state and it’s hard to justify leap-frogging millions of dollars in employee bonuses over those bills.”

This fulfills a campaign pledge Mendoza made during her campaign for the office of comptroller. The previous administration had argued they could not separate out employee bonuses from regular pay. Mendoza was able to implement the change in her first day.

[Payroll Bulletin 2-16](#), distributed to state agencies Wednesday, explains that employee bonus requests should be submitted separately from regular pay forms for state employees from now on.

This will allow the office to group those bonuses along with vendors, state legislators and top elected officials, including the Comptroller, whose payments are subject to delay due to insufficient funds because the state has not passed a balanced budget.

“When we learned through news reports in October, that as social service agencies were cutting programs because of delays in state payments, the Comptroller, at the direction of the Governor, was giving out nearly \$4 million in bonuses to mainly top management staff in the heat of the election, I found that unconscionable,” Mendoza said.

The new rule will also bring needed transparency to the practice of granting bonuses, allowing the public to know who is on the receiving end of such awards.

“This is a necessary step to ensure accountability and transparency in government and should've been in place before now,” Mendoza said.

The state’s current backlog of bills stands at \$10.4 billion and growing.

The nearly \$4 million in bonuses reported in October were on top of employees’ regular salaries. Regular salary payments to employees will continue uninterrupted.

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