

for Child and Family Advocates

April 4, 2012

House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees Pass Department of Human Services Fiscal Year 2013 Budget

On Tuesday, March 27, 2012, the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee for the Department of Human Services (DHS) approved its version of the fiscal year (FY) 2013 budget for DHS (SB 956). The Senate Subcommittee's \$6.55 billion budget (\$991 million state general fund) for FY2013 is \$45 million below the Governor's recommended budget and appropriates \$35 million less the Governor's recommendation in state general fund spending. The Senate Subcommittee includes boilerplate language directing DHS to operate a pilot program in Kent County to privatize some child welfare services and includes the Governor's recommended Supported Visitation program and Parent Partners program.

On Wednesday, March 28, 2012, the House Appropriations Committee approved its version of the FY13 budget (HB 5374). The House Committee's budget totals \$6.53 billion, \$67 million below the Governor's recommendation (\$35 million less in GF than the Governor's budget). Some of the differences between the House Subcommittee and Governor's budget include the reinstatement of \$5 million for before- or after-school funding as well as the closure of all three state-run juvenile justice facilities.

The Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS) budget has a total appropriation of \$6.7 billion in the current fiscal year. More than 80 percent of the dollars spent through the DHS budget are from federal sources; only 15 percent is state funding. Total funding for the DHS budget has grown 73 percent since fiscal year 2002, from \$4.0 billion to a peak of \$6.9 billion, with the growth driven by large increases in demand for the federally-funded food assistance program.

The Governor provides a total of \$6.6 billion for the Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS) for fiscal year 2013, of which \$1 billion in state general fund. More than half (54%) the dollars spent through the DHS budget are for the federally funded food assistance program, with only 10 percent allocated for other public assistance, including the Family Independence Program. Approximately 15 percent supports child welfare services.

Among the provisions affecting children and youths in the House and Senate Subcommittee bills are the following:

Income Assistance

Family Independence Program (FIP)

428 W. Lenawee, Lansing MI 48933
517/485-3500
michiganschildren.org

- *Governor:* The Governor's budget reflects the ongoing implementation of a 48 month lifetime limit on the receipt of FIP benefits, with an expected reduction of over 7,000 cases between fiscal years 2012 and 2013 as a result of this policy change. FIP caseloads are expected to fall from 85,389 in fiscal year 2007 to 61,850 in 2013, a reduction of 28 percent. The Governor's budget assumes \$22 million in savings from caseload reduction.
- *Senate Subcommittee:* Concurs with the Governor.
- *House Subcommittee:* The House subcommittee revises caseload projections to approximately 59,000 cases for FY 2013 at average of \$406.60 per month instead of the Governor's caseload estimation and average amount of \$427 per month. This results in a \$51.7 million gross, \$10.5 million GF reduction to FIP.

Home heating assistance

- *Governor:* The Governor's budget includes \$195 million in federal funds for the home heating credit, energy-related crisis payments and weatherization for low-income home owners. \$60 million in state general funds is also available through the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) to provide heating assistance to low-income families and individuals – including DHS clients – through the Vulnerable Fund.
- *Senate Subcommittee:* Concurs with the Governor.
- *House Subcommittee:* The House concurs with the Governor in the increase to the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) reflecting the changes in federal funding. The House does not concur with the \$60 million in GF from LARA. The House reduces administrative costs and shifts \$8 million in federal LIHEAP funds strictly for energy assistance and uses \$52 million in TANF funding to fill the \$60 million removal from LARA. This is one time funding.

Children's Clothing Allowance

- *Governor:* The Governor's budget retains \$2.9 million for eligible children in a FIP program group that do not have an adult included in the program group.
- *Senate Subcommittee:* Concurs with the Governor.
- *House Subcommittee:* Concurs with the Governor.

Child Welfare

Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention and Family Preservation Programs

- *Governor:* The Governor's budget includes some changes from FY2012 including a \$2.7 million reduction to Strong Families Safe Children for a total of \$12.4 million to reflect an anticipated federal grant reduction and a \$500,000 increase to Families First for a total of \$18.5 million. Child Protection and Permanency would be funded at \$16.6 million and Family Reunification at \$4.0 million. The Governor also includes \$2 million in federal funds for a new supported visitation, home-based parent education program that will support family reunification for approximately 7,000 families as well as \$500,000 in federal funds for a new parent partners

program – a peer-to-peer mentoring program for parents – to serve 360 families in cases where the child/children have been removed from the home.

- *Senate Subcommittee:* The Senate Subcommittee concurs with the Governor on funding for Strong Families Safe Children, Child Protection and Permanency, Family Reunification, Supported Visitation, and Parent Partners program. The subcommittee reduces Families First funding to \$16 million (\$2.5 million below the Governor). The Senate Subcommittee recommends removing excess authorization in several line items pertaining to child abuse and neglect programs including Children’s Trust Fund Grants, Child Protective Services Workers, Direct Care Workers, Permanency Planning Specialists, and Child Welfare First Line Supervisors.
- *House Subcommittee:* The House Subcommittee provides \$4 million below the Governor’s recommendation in prevention and family preservation programs including \$16 million for Families First (\$2.5 million below the Governor’s proposal), \$12.4 million for Strong Families Safe Children (concur with the Governor), \$16.0 million for Families First (\$2.5 million below the Governor), \$15.3 million for Child Protection and Permanency (\$1.3 million below the Governor), and \$3.6 million for Family Reunification (\$400,000 below the Governor). The House Subcommittee includes the Governor’s Supported Visitation and Parent Partners program.

Foster Care:

- *Governor:* The Governor’s budget includes funding for child welfare improvements required as a result of a consent decree following litigation by Children’s Rights, a child advocacy organization, including additional staff to reduce caseloads, technology and data collection improvements, and expansion of foster care eligibility to age 21. The Governor provides an \$11.3 million increase (\$6.3 million in state general funds) to increase the rate paid to foster and adoptive parents by \$3 per day, to \$19.83 per day for children ages 0 to 12; \$24.78 per day for children ages 13-17; and \$21.27 for children in independent living. Finally, \$23.9 million is cut from the County Child Care Fund in anticipation of a reduction in caseloads.
- *Senate Subcommittee:* The Senate Subcommittee concurs with the Governor’s recommendation to increase the rate paid to foster parents by \$3 per day but not for adoptive parents and guardians for a total increase of \$7.5 million. The subcommittee also includes a \$4.1 million (\$1.7 million GF) in additional funds to increase the administrative per diem to \$40 for private foster care providers and assumes a caseload of 4,175. The Senate Subcommittee provides \$2 million in GF for a special adoption subsidy that would allow adoptive parents with special needs children to claim increased subsidies for up to a year after an adoption has been finalized. The subcommittee concurs with the Governor on the County Child Care Fund. The Senate Subcommittee adds boilerplate language directing the department to implement a pilot program in Kent County to privatize some child welfare services. The subcommittee also directs the department to track and report quarterly the number and percentage of children who received both a physical and mental health assessment prior to placement in the foster care and juvenile justice systems.
- *House Subcommittee:* The House Subcommittee concurs with the Governor on the increase to increase the rate paid to foster and adoptive parents by \$3 per day. The House Subcommittee

increases the child placing agency administrative rate to \$42 for a total of \$1.9 million in GF to hold counties harmless. The subcommittee reduces funding for the County Child Care Fund by \$14.5 million and increases funding for the in-home incentive program; total program costs are \$15 million and assumes the program will save \$10 million in residential placement costs.

Youth in transition:

- *Governor:* The Governor recommends maintaining funding for youth in transition programs at \$14.7 million, which includes a \$1.9 million (\$878,000 in state general funds) increase for the Michigan Youth Opportunities Initiative (MYOI) from FY2012, which helps youths transition from the child welfare system to adult employment and independence.
- *Senate Committee:* The Senate Subcommittee provides a smaller increase of \$1.6 million to MYOI (\$648,900 GF).
- *House Subcommittee:* Concurs with the Governor.

Guardianship assistance program:

- *Governor:* The Governor recommends a \$2 million (\$1.8 million GF) increase to the Guardianship assistance program to reflect an increase in the number of cases and cost per case.
- *Senate Committee:* Concurs with the Governor.
- *House Subcommittee:* The House Subcommittee revises the funding source for FY2013 caseload projections and increases the foster family per diem by \$3 for new guardianship assistance cases for a \$2.1 million increase (\$1.3 million GF).

Before- or After-School Programs

- *Governor:* The Governor's budget does not include funding for before- or after-school funding.
- *Senate Committee:* Concurs with the Governor.
- *House Subcommittee:* The House subcommittee provides \$5 million in federal funding for before- or after-school programs targeted to children in kindergarten to ninth grade. Eligible programs must serve areas near schools that do not meet AYP and serve children with income below 200% of the federal poverty level.

Juvenile Justice

Residential Facilities for Juvenile Offenders:

- *Governor:* The Governor recommends funding the W.J. Maxey Training School at \$11.5 million, the Bay Pines Center at \$5 million, and the Shawono Center at \$5 million.
- *Senate Subcommittee:* The Senate Subcommittee recommends reducing the funding for the three state-run juvenile justice facilities by \$1 million total - \$500,000 cut to Maxey Training School and \$250,000 cut each to Bay Pinse and Shawono Center. The subcommittee appropriates \$1.6 million in state general funds to pay all exceptional medical expenses at all three facilities. The Senate also appropriates \$1.6 million to reduce the county share of the per diem costs of the facilities to 40 percent.

- *House Subcommittee:* The House Subcommittee recommends closing all three facilities and transferring the youths to private residential facilities funded through foster care payments. Boilerplate language is added requiring the DHS to report on the placement of the youth in the juvenile justice facilities and their current status six months after the facilities are closed.