

September 30, 2020

Dear Senator Stabenow,

Over this year, Michigan's Children has relayed a wide range of recommendations and constituent feedback regarding issues impacting children, youth and families in our state during this crisis. With one more effort to pass more COVID relief underway, we write to highlight key new proposals that would improve child, youth, and family outcomes during COVID, as well as highlight missing areas where you must champion improvements.

- **State and Local Government Assistance:** \$238 billion in aid for state governments, \$179 billion in aid for local governments, and \$9.5 billion in aid for tribal governments.
- **Child Care Assistance:** \$50 billion for Child Care Relief grants, \$7 billion for the Child Care and Development Block Grant, and \$1.7 billion for Head Start.
- **Parent Skill-Building & Family Literacy:** \$2 billion for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, including \$485 million for adult education and \$518 million for youth training.
- **Youth Transition Supports:** \$350 million for the John H. Chafee program for youth aging out of foster care, and \$50 million for Educational and Training Vouchers for youth aging out of care; increase in maximum Chafee award for youth per year from \$5,000 to \$12,000; and raise the maximum eligible age to 26 for youth who experienced foster care.
- **Family Stability:** \$325 million for child abuse and neglect prevention programming, including \$225 million for community-based grants and \$100 million for state grants; \$100 million for home visiting; \$75 billion for Child Welfare services under Title IV-B of the Social Security Act; \$10 million increase for the federal Court Improvement Program.

We ask you to consider championing these issues that could become missed opportunities:

- **No Targeted Learning Investment:** Best estimates have found a need of \$12 billion for Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) incl. \$11 billion for K-12 (Part B), \$500 million for infants/toddlers (Part C), and \$400 million for preschool (Sec 619); and \$6.2 billion in 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21CCLC) out-of-school learning need.
- **Kinship Care:** Proposed changes include waiving state match and improved flexibility for allowable program models, but dedicated kinship care funds will be most impactful.
- **Long-Term Court Improvement:** Proposed changes include allowing increased CIP funding to fall back to prior levels in FY22. We know the effects of this crisis on family stability and behavioral health will last beyond the pandemic itself. Pre-emptively limiting efforts to improve our court system in the face of long-term increased need is misguided.
- **Improve WIC-Allowable Purchases:** HEROES Act proposed a commission to explore streamlining food delivery, but families need innovation and spending flexibility now.

We appreciate your work thus far and thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

Matthew Gillard  
President & CEO

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