



Michigan's  
Children

Public policy  
in the best interest  
of children



Contact: Teri Banas  
[teri@michiganschildren.org](mailto:teri@michiganschildren.org)  
(517) 896-0241

Immediate Release

**Detroit Parents Pose Early Childhood Issues before State House Candidates**  
*Michigan's Children, Think Babies Michigan, Detroit Champions for Hope,  
Congress of Communities to Host Virtual Forum Sept. 26<sup>th</sup> in Eight Legislative Races*

DETROIT – [Michigan's Children](#), the [Think Babies Michigan](#) initiative, and two Detroit-based advocacy groups are teaming up to host a **virtual parent-led candidate forum** featuring candidates in **eight State House races** on **Monday, Sept. 26, 2022** (1:00-3:00 pm).

[Detroit Champions for Hope](#), affiliated with the early-childhood advocacy group, Hope Starts Here, and the [Congress of Communities](#), a youth-focused advocacy group founded in Southwest Detroit, will field parents from Detroit to tell their stories and ask questions around **early childhood issues**.

**Invited candidates are from House races in the 1<sup>st</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> districts.** There's been a strong response from invited candidates planning to attend.

This nonpartisan forum – not a debate – is available to the public and media. Register here:  
<https://loom.ly/kaWvfpY> .

Or, watch the forum via a livestream on the Detroit Champions for Hope's Facebook page:  
<https://www.facebook.com/detroitchampionsforhope>

There are a plethora of family and community issues on the minds of parent leaders heading up next week's forum. They want to share their experiences, and hear from candidates, on **early childhood education, child care, the early childhood workforce shortage, families with disabilities, the teacher shortage, mental health, affordable housing, the effects of the economy on families, student loan relief, and charter school issues.**

Invited candidates by House race are: 1<sup>st</sup> District – **Tyrone Carter (D)** and **Paula Campbell (R)**; 4<sup>th</sup> District – **Karen Whitsett (D)** and **Tonya Renay Wells (R)**; 5<sup>th</sup> District – **Natalie Price (D)** and **Paul Taros (R)**; 6<sup>th</sup> District – **Regina Weiss (D)** and **Charles Villerot (R)**; **Helena Scott (D)**; 8<sup>th</sup> District – **Mike McFall (D)** and **Robert Noble (R)**; 9<sup>th</sup> District – **Abraham Aiyash (D)** and **Michele Lundgren (R)**; 10<sup>th</sup> District – **Joe Tate (D)** and **Mark Corcoran (R)**.

**Amanda Holiday**, Early Childhood Programs Director for the Congress of Communities, said local elections are more important than ever. "It is imperative that Detroit residents know about the candidates they are choosing to make the vital decisions that impact their everyday lives," she said.

**Tommarra Grice**, President of Detroit Champions for Hope, said parents want to know how legislative candidates will prioritize family and early childhood priorities this election cycle. "Detroit Champions for Hope is committed to early childhood system building and connecting community champions to problem solvers," Grice added.

Matt Gillard, President & CEO of Michigan's Children, said he is thrilled to see such strong civic engagement by parents affiliated with the local partner groups. "Really, that's what elections are all about – voters speaking up, and candidates listening to the voices of constituents - to make policy decisions in the best interest of kids and families. It puts the power back where it belongs – with the people."

Media interviews with hosts and questioners are welcomed.

**The sponsoring organizations are planning a second online forum on Oct. 24, 2022 for candidates in state Senate races including the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> districts.**

###



*Detroit Champions for Hope is the lead organization responsible for Parent Engagement and Advocacy across the Hope Starts Here initiative. Our goal is to support parents and caregivers as their child's first teachers and champions. We accomplish this via the following three strategies: Supporting the role of families in children's development; Improving the processes, programs and systems that support parents and caregivers; Creating a team of advocates to champion early childhood.*



*Congress of Communities (CoC) is the resident-led organizing and advocacy agency in #SwDetroit that works to facilitate solutions around community challenges and support community growth.*



*Public policy  
in the best interest  
of children*

*Michigan's Children is the only statewide, multi-issue advocacy organization focused solely on public policy in the best interest of children from cradle to career and their families. We have been creating opportunities for young people and caregivers to share their stories, concerns and suggestions directly with policymakers since 1996. As a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, our forums are presented as a non-partisan activity. <http://www.michiganschildren.org>*



*Think Babies Michigan is a collaborative of thousands of members—leaders, experts, families, organizations and providers—working together to improve the lives of babies prenatally through age 3 in Michigan.*

**Michigan's Children, 215 S. Washington Sq., Ste 135, Lansing, Michigan 48933 (517) 485-3500  
[www.michiganschildren.org](http://www.michiganschildren.org)**