



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Early Childhood Investment is Michigan's Foundation for a Better Economic Future**

Never before has Michigan's economic outlook been so bleak. Legislators are working feverishly to balance the state budget with an eye toward recovery, long-term prosperity, development, and a thriving employment base. In the appropriations process, nearly all state funding for early childhood programs and services have been cut. If these cuts are not restored in negotiations between the House and Senate over the next month, the impact will be lasting and contrary to the long-term goal of a better economic future.

Across the country, business leaders, bankers, economists and scientists have come to the same conclusion: creating the workforce of the 21<sup>st</sup> century begins in the earliest years of life, and those early investments provide the highest returns for individuals, families, employers and communities. In fact, the internal rate of return on investment in high quality early childhood development programs can range from 12%-16% for society as a whole and the participants (Art Rolnick-Senior Vice President and Director of Research, Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis.)

The early childhood programs on the chopping block now benefit Michigan taxpayers through:

- Reduced welfare costs
- Reduced criminality and associated costs
- Reduced teen pregnancy
- Reduced use of special education

- Reduced hospitalizations and emergency room visits
- Reduced dropout rates
- Reduced grade repetition

These proven benefits to taxpayers and our communities are the reasons it is vital to restore funding for early childhood programs and services. The programs slated to be cut help children ages 0-5 build a foundation socially, emotionally and physically. The partnership for America's Economic Success found early childhood investments yield long-term fiscal benefits and have the potential to produce millions of new jobs and substantially boost the Gross Domestic Product in the long run. **A brighter economic future for Michigan directly correlates with the great start we provide for our children today.**

If not restored, the immediate local impact is:

- The elimination of the Great Start Readiness preschool program resulting in 184 four-year olds who will not have a pre-school experience prior to entering kindergarten (evidence links preschool experience with success in school).
- The elimination of Great Parents Great Start funding will severely curtail critical nurse home visits to newborns, wipe out access to financial support for quality child care for 31 families, and severely handicap our ability to provide support to 40 at-risk children and families.
- The thwarting of progress by the Great Start Collaborative of Livingston County towards building a comprehensive system to support early childhood development for our children.
- The lay off of 17 employees that support these programs.

Seventy-five percent of Michigan voters say early childhood development and education programs should be protected from state budget cuts. Livingston county parents, leaders, and educators are in a unique position to positively impact Michigan's future by advocating for restoration of these vital early childhood programs.

Save our children. Save our community. Save our State. Do your part by sending an email, writing a letter or making a phone call to the following key legislators and ask them to restore funding for early childhood. Use this link to help: <http://capwiz.com/ecic4kids/home/>

**Senate:** Ron Jelinek, Cameron Brown, Mickey Switalski, Mike Bishop, Mike Prusi,

**House:** Terry Brown, Richard Hammel, Gail Haines, Cushingberry, Andy Dillon, Kevin Elsenheimer

**Governor:** Jennifer Granholm