



## MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services  
FROM: Gilda Z. Jacobs, President and CEO  
DATE: April 11, 2019  
SUBJECT: 2020 DHHS Budget Recommendations

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I am pleased to share the priorities of the Michigan League for Public Policy for the 2020 DHHS budget. Over the last year, the League listened to hundreds of Michiganders around the state and heard loud and clear that the state's economic recovery has not reached all of your constituents. In both urban and rural areas of the state, jobs with living wages and benefits are hard to find, child poverty rates are still high, and access to basic needs programs remains limited.

Fact sheets are attached with additional information related to the League's priorities, which are highlighted below.

- **Protect funding for [healthcare services](#).** The League urges you to protect funding for Medicaid, the Healthy Michigan Plan, and the Children's Health Insurance program. The League has opposed work requirements for Healthy Michigan enrollees because the overwhelming evidence is that they do not work. Further, work requirement waivers in Arkansas and Kentucky were recently vacated by the courts, with the federal government's approval deemed arbitrary and capricious.
- **Increase funding for [maternal and child health](#).** The League supports adequate funding for services for moms and babies, including home visiting, the creation of a centralized intake system for Michigan's home visiting program, and restored funding for state family planning and pregnancy prevention services.
- **Make Michigan's [public assistance programs](#) more responsive to need.** Since the beginning of Michigan's "welfare reform" efforts in 1993, the monthly payment for income assistance has been increased in a meaningful way only once, with monthly grants rising from \$459 in 1993 to only \$492 in 2018. More than three-quarters of the beneficiaries of Family Independence Program (FIP) benefits are children, with many under the age of five. With deeper poverty, pressures on the state's child welfare system have grown, as more parents lack the resources to provide for even the most basic needs of their children.

While not specifically within the purview of this Subcommittee, we also urge you to help families keep working, while putting money back into local communities, by modernizing the state's [Earned Income Tax Credit \(EITC\)](#) by expanding it to young childless workers, and incrementally increasing it to its former level of 20% of the federal credit. The EITC is only available to people who have earned income, and is used for such work supports as transportation and child care.

We hope the attached information is helpful as you deliberate a budget that touches thousands of Michigan residents with high needs. We look forward to working with you as the budget process proceeds.