

STATE SENATOR • DEBORAH CHERRY • 26TH DISTRICT

Cherry Press Release

P.O. Box 30036 • Lansing • Michigan • 48909-7536 • 517-373-1636 • Fax: 517-373-1453
E-mail: sendcherry@senate.michigan.gov • www.senate.mi.gov/cherry



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Contact: Sen Deb Cherry
Phone: (517) 373-1636

Cherry Fights for Early Childhood Funding

Introduces legislation to restore funding to programs that help working parents, get children off on the right foot

LANSING - Today Sen. Deb Cherry (D-Burton) fought on the Senate floor to restore almost \$54 million in funding to early childhood programs and the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) in the state's Department of Human Services budget. Cuts to these programs would not only hurt children and working parents, but would put the state at risk to lose nearly \$58 million in federal stimulus dollars.

"Studies have shown that the benefits of early childhood programs far outweigh the costs, and if there's one thing we should be investing in to secure the future of Michigan's economy, it's our children," said Sen. Cherry. "These programs help children prepare emotionally and academically to succeed in school and in future careers, and provide support for working parents who rely on child care so they can keep their jobs."

According to the ECIC, each dollar invested in early childhood programs reaps anywhere from \$2 to \$7 in economic benefits for the state. Michigan currently ranks 27th in the nation for child well-being, and cutting funds would drive that number even lower.

Restoring these funds would help the state avoid severe cuts to child care, before and after school programs, and early childhood education programs. In addition to the lost opportunity for federal stimulus dollars, these cuts would also jeopardize another \$200 million in federal funding that our state can't afford to lose.

Senate Democrats introduced eight different amendments to restore funding for vital DHS programs, all of which were defeated on a party line vote.

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