

Help Me Grow Talking Points for Conference Committee

FOR YOUR USE ONLY: DO NOT PASS OUT TO LEGISLATORS

KEY POINTS: PLEASE BE SURE TO MAKE THESE POINTS IN YOUR CALLS

- I am calling on behalf of (your organization here).
- Help Me Grow has already received a 40 percent cut! We cannot afford more cuts to one our most important and effective early childhood programs!
- The Senate's proposal to use \$21.5 million per year from TANF for Help Me Grow is not a viable solution- we do not support cutting other essential parts of our safety net to fund Help Me Grow.
- The TANF budget is already completely obligated to other priorities.
- All of the programs currently in the TANF budget are important to support children and families.
- Reducing our General Revenue Funds in Help Me Grow to \$14.9 million per year will also greatly limit Ohio's ability to draw down federal Medicaid funding for home visitation.
- Please fund Help Me Grow at the Executive proposed level of \$36.5 million in GENERAL REVENUE FUNDS to protect this essential service and ensure that we can maximize our federal draw down.

Optional Talking Points:

- Your investment and commitment to Help Me Grow has allowed Ohio to build a high-quality home visitation program that serves the needs of our most vulnerable children and families.
- Help Me Grow ensures that we are reaching these families when intervention is the most effective- during that child's first three years.
- There is no other comprehensive family outreach for infants and toddlers in our communities- without Help Me Grow, many of these children will fall through the cracks.
- Help Me Grow helps prevent child abuse and neglect, which unfortunately is on the rise as many parents struggle to make ends meet in a difficult economy.
- Making more cuts to the Help Me Grow system will reverse much of the progress we have made in building a system that works for our most needy families.

Tips for making phone calls:

- Clearly state your name and where you live.
- Be prepared to make your point in several sentences.
- Ask for a response that includes the elected official's position.

- Realize that the staff member answering phones may have been instructed not to make detailed comments about the issues; this is done in letters so that elected official's position is not misrepresented.
- Follow up with a letter if possible. Mail, fax or e-mail it to the legislator's office.

Please call ALL of the following Representatives and Senators and the Governor's Office- it does not matter if they do not directly represent you! These are the members that will influence the conference committee and need to get hundreds of calls by the end of next week. Remember, ask you staff and parents to make calls! Ask you churches and your board, and anyone else who cares about young children!!

Governor's Office: Janetta King, Policy Director, (614) 466-3555

Senator Niehaus: 614-466-8082

Representative Batchelder: 614-466-8140

Representative Amstutz: 614-466-1474

Senator Wagoner: 614-466-8060

Senator Carey: 614-466-8156

Senator Harris: 614-466-8086

Representative Garrison: 614-644-8728

Representative Budish: 614-466-5441

Representative Goyal: 614-466-5802

Please email DAVID HOWARD at dhoward@groundworkohio.org to let us know how many calls you have made so we can track our coverage. Thank you!