

Groundwork Ohio's Policy Roadmap

Amended Substitute House Bill 96 - Pending in the Ohio Senate

The Ohio House has passed a version of the state operating budget, House Bill 96, that slashes essential funding for early childhood programs. The Governor's original budget proposal included critical investments in child care, maternal and infant health, and early learning.

We are asking the Ohio Senate to reinstate the Governor's proposed funding levels by doing the following:

1 Make work pay for working families with young children.

- RESTORE publicly funded child care eligibility to 160% of the Federal Poverty Level.
- RESTORE the Child Care Choice Voucher program to \$75M in FY26 and \$150M in FY27.
- RESTORE the proposed refundable Child Tax Credit of up to \$1,000 per child under age 7.

2 Improve health outcomes for moms and babies.

- RESTORE \$22.5M in proposed investment in Home Visiting, an evidence-based program.
- RESTORE the originally proposed infant vitality funds to \$7.5M each fiscal year.
- RESTORE existing law requiring multi-year continuous Medicaid enrollment for babies ages 0-3 championed by House leaders last budget cycle.
- STOP restrictions on the use of doula services to Medicaid eligible women.
- RESTORE funding for the Lead Safe Home and Lead Abatement programs within the Ohio Department of Health.
- RESTORE funding for tobacco prevention programming.

3 Support quality early learning experiences that prepare children for Kindergarten.

- RESTORE requirements to integrate the science of reading in early learning.
- RESTORE additional funding for the Governor's Imagination Library.
- RESTORE the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment—the only tool the state has to understand the impact of early childhood experiences for every child.