



## Summit County Democratic Lawmakers

August 17, 2016

Governor John Kasich  
Riffe Center, 30th Floor  
77 South High Street  
Columbus, OH 43215-6117

Dear Governor Kasich,

With just weeks before the new school year is set to begin, a recent rule change proposed by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services – without consulting or even briefing the Early Childhood Advisory Council or many of the affected organizations – threatens to reduce critical early childhood services to some of the most vulnerable in our communities.

By partnering with the federal Head Start program, local child care centers are currently able to reach larger numbers of children and their parents and provide full-day, full-year services that enhance at-risk children's emotional and physical well-being, develop strong cognitive skills and foster stable family relationships.

Local child care providers should be able to utilize all available resources necessary to provide these high-quality, comprehensive early childhood services. However, the proposed rule change to limit providers' ability to layer state and federal funds will drastically reduce their capacity to serve the low-income families that need early childhood support services the most.

Head Start/Child Care partnership programs are at risk of losing roughly \$64,000 in critical funds in Summit County alone and at least \$12 million in state funding across Ohio – not to mention the hundreds of millions of dollars in federal grant funding that will now be jeopardized.

Early childhood is a critical time in every child's development, and we believe the state should support programs that have a proven track record of success in providing vulnerable families with quality enrichment opportunities that enhance their learning, health and well-being.

As representatives from Summit County, we are prepared to support legislation enabling child care centers to utilize both federal and state funds to provide comprehensive enrichment services to low-income children and their families.

However, you have the ability to step in now and prevent child care centers from losing millions in critical funding. We strongly urge you to issue an executive order halting this rule change that will harm too many of our vulnerable youth.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Emilia Sykes in black ink.

State Rep. Emilia Sykes  
House District 34

Handwritten signature of Greta Johnson in black ink.

State Rep. Greta Johnson  
House District 35

CC: ODJFS Director Cynthia Dungey