



## **OAFCS LEGISLATIVE ALERT**

### **CALL FOR ACTION:**

**Call or email your state senator and request that he/she support using the \$404 million in savings anticipated from the Medicaid Expansion to restore school funding rather than to reduce the state income tax by 4% as proposed in Senate Bill 210.**

### **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Find contact information for your state senator at [www.legislature.state.oh.us](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us). Under “Locating Legislators,” choose “Senate” and “Zip Code.” Then enter your zip code and click “Go.”

### **BACKGROUND:**

When developing the current biennial budget, Ohio’s legislators chose to increase state funding for Medicaid rather than accept the Medicaid Expansion under the federal Affordable Care Act. On October 21, the State Controlling Board approved Governor Kasich’s request to bypass the state legislature and proceed with the Medicaid Expansion that will bring federal dollars to the state and free up approximately \$404 million of Ohio funds originally budgeted for Medicaid.

Senate Bill 210, introduced by Senator Chris Widener (R) and cosponsored by Senators Keith Faber (R), Tom Patton (R), Larry Obhof (R), and Scott Oelslager (R), would use the \$404 million in savings to reduce state income tax rates by 4% beginning in tax year 2014.

- 80% of Ohioans—those who earn \$66,000 or less—would see their annual income tax reduced by amounts ranging on average from only \$1 to \$48 depending on the bracket. The 80% would receive 31% of the reduction.
- 5% of Ohioans—those who earn \$151,000 or more—would see their annual income tax reduced by amounts ranging on average from \$244 to \$1437. This 5% with the top incomes would receive 40% of the reduction.
- Reduction of the income tax would also result in further reductions in funding for local governments and public libraries.

Significant funding cuts in the preceding biennium budget for schools, local governments and public services have not yet been restored.

## TALKING POINTS:

- The proposed income tax reduction will result in only about \$48 or less for 80% of Ohioans. The 5% of Ohioans who have the highest incomes would realize 40% of the tax reduction. Using these savings for a 4% reduction in income taxes is wrong when Ohio still has so many important unmet needs.
- One of these unmet needs is education. Although state funding for school districts was increased \$803 million for the current fiscal year, it remains \$607 million short of what it was four years ago.
- A quality education means more than the state minimum requirements. While the Common Core provides a strong academic foundation, students also need access to a comprehensive curriculum that includes art, music, physical education, family and consumer sciences, foreign languages, AP courses, etc. Test scores do not represent the totality of a quality education.
- Using the savings from the Medicaid Expansion to further increase school funding would help school districts maintain important Family and Consumer Sciences programs and restore programs that have been lost due to lack of funds in recent years.
- Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) classes in middle and high schools help students make informed decisions about their well-being, relationships, and resources to achieve optimal quality of life. In FCS classes, students gain critical life skills, such as:
  - Integrating management principles that lead to more productive and meaningful lives through goal setting, planning and time management applied in personal, family, school, and workplace settings.
  - Developing, implementing, and periodically reviewing and revising a career blueprint in the context of other life choices and changing employment trends, societal needs and economic conditions.
  - Planning and preparing healthy meals using dietary guidelines to reduce the risks of chronic disease and unsafe habits.
  - Developing personal financial literacy skills needed to successfully manage financial resources and avoid debt and bankruptcy.
  - Discovering the needs of infants and young children and how parents and childcare providers can meet those needs including preparing these young children to be ready to learn when they begin school.

## SOURCES:

<http://www.policymattersohio.org/4percent-oct2013>

<http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Career-Tech/Career-Technical/Family-and-Consumer-Sciences-Content-Standards>

## FEEDBACK:

Please send the name of the senator you contacted to Sandra Laersonson ([Laersonson1@gmail.com](mailto:Laersonson1@gmail.com)) or Janet Laster ([JanetFLaster@gmail.com](mailto:JanetFLaster@gmail.com)), co-chair for public policy, Ohio Association of Family & Consumer Sciences (OAFCS).