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Governor Signs Bill Supporting Ohio Children, Seniors and Families

COLUMBUS—Governor John Kasich signed House Bill 483 today, a budget bill that includes new investments in Ohio's children, seniors and families. Among other investments, the bill includes the first new funding for child welfare in over nine years. It also includes an allocation for adult protective services that is nearly four times more than the state has ever provided for adult protective services.

"The bill takes clear steps to support families and communities in Ohio. Advocates for Ohio's Future is grateful for the work of the House, the Senate and the Governor to support important investments that protect children and seniors from abuse and neglect and improve access to child care for working parents," said Col Owens, Co-chair of Advocates for Ohio's Future.

"We appreciate the efforts of our advocacy partners and supporters across the state who helped build the case for these timely investments," said Mark Davis, Co-chair of Advocates for Ohio's Future.

House Bill 483 includes \$36 million in new investments to strengthen families and communities:

- \$10 million to strengthen Adult Protective Services across Ohio. The investment will improve the state's capacity to protect older Ohioans from abuse, neglect, and exploitation and help ensure Ohio seniors live with safety and dignity.
- \$10 million to strengthen Child Welfare services in all 88 counties. The investment will build on improvements and outcomes for over 100,000 children and their families.
- \$16 million to improve access to child care, provide greater stability for working parents and provide children continuous access to early learning programs.

The bill also restored funding for Ohio's Federally Qualified Health Centers and increased the state's Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) from five percent to ten percent of the federal credit.

"We believe creating opportunities for all Ohioans takes investment, now and into the future," Advocates for Ohio's Future State Director Will Petrik said. "The investments in HB 483 help Ohioans participate in the economy and our communities."

The signing of the bill initiates two work groups focused on funding allocation to strengthen the adult protective services and child welfare systems. The work groups, led by Cynthia Dungey, Director of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, have 90 days to develop recommendations.

"We look forward to working with lawmakers, the administration and other stakeholders to ensure that Ohio's 88 counties have the resources to ensure the safety of children and older adults," said Mark Davis, Co-chair of Advocates for Ohio's Future.