



Advocates for Ohio's Future
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Advocates for Ohio's Future Unveils 2020-21 Budget Priorities Largely Aligned with DeWine Goals, Urge Incorporation in Budget Bill

Columbus - Advocates for Ohio's Future (AOF) previewed its 2020-21 budget and policy priorities in a press conference on January 28. The health and human services coalition focuses on policy areas that support healthy children and families, quality communities and pathways to prosperity for all so all Ohioans can live better lives.

Human services play a key role in stabilizing individuals and families so they can compete and thrive in the 21st century economy. Our state has an opportunity to prepare Ohioans to acquire and maintain quality jobs, so in the long run, they can support themselves and their families.

“Bold policy reform and investments are needed so Ohioans can climb the ladder up and out of poverty, said AOF Co-Chair Steve Wagner. “Ohio needs targeted investments in our greatest asset—our people.”

“We agree with Governor DeWine: We have a moral obligation to reach out and support at-risk children and families,” said Tara Britton, coalition Co-Chair. “It will take robust public investments and policy changes that address the needs of low-income families holistically to strengthen Ohio's families and workforce to make all Ohioans healthy and competitive.”

The following policies will build an Ohio that works for everyone—every person and every family in every corner of our state—and empowers them with the opportunities and skills needed to succeed.

Healthy Children and Families: Healthy people with access to quality and affordable health care, housing, food and early education opportunities build strong families and thriving communities.

- Maintain Medicaid expansion without barriers like work requirements or premiums
- Fully fund a comprehensive, continuum of care system for behavioral health services that includes both treatment and prevention
- Increase access to school-based health and mental health services
- Increase investments in evidence-based home visiting to serve more children and families
- Develop community-led, state supported strategies for improving infant and maternal mortality
- Implement and fund a comprehensive approach to address food insecurity and direct state dollars to Ohio families who need it most

Quality Communities: People of all ages should have a safe and affordable place to live, access to transportation and essential support services in their communities. Investing in the care and well-being of our children, older adults and homeless families will strengthen communities and attract jobs and economic development.

- Ensure older adults in all counties are safe and can access services they need by investing in Adult Protective Services and restoring cuts to the Senior Community Service Block Grant
- Invest in critically important housing projects and programs for low-income Ohioans, including the Ohio Housing Trust Fund

- Reform Ohio’s children services system by increasing investment in the State Child Protection Allocation (SCPA) and supporting the Children’s Continuum of Care Reform (CCCR)
- Increase access to accessible, affordable public transit and transit alternatives for all Ohioans
- Invest in state infrastructure for the 2020 U.S. Census and establish a state Complete Count Commission to ensure each Ohioan is counted for the equitable and accurate distribution of public funds

[Pathways to Prosperity for All](#): Low-income Ohioans should have the appropriate skills and supports to be competitive in the new economy and job market. This requires an investment in education from early childhood through secondary education, job training and skill development, addressing barriers to work through work support services and programing for at risk individuals.

- Build and strengthen Ohio’s direct care workforce by increasing wages to 200% FPL
- Improve the process to obtain a Certificate of Qualification for Employment (CQE) to get more Ohioans back to work
- Invest in the SNAP Education & Training Program to spur development of training initiatives, encourage local partnerships and support job seekers
- Expand eligibility for publicly funded childcare to 200% FPL
- Increase the Earned Income Tax Credit to 20% and make it refundable
- Increase monthly support to Ohio Works First children and families
- Ensure the TANF program is meeting the needs of at-risk families
- Implement research-based school safety initiatives that support students in all schools in Ohio
- Reinvest funding for youth prisons to into community-based alternatives to incarceration

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Advocates for Ohio’s Future is a nonpartisan coalition of nearly 500 local and statewide organizations that promotes health and human service budget and policy solutions so all Ohioans live better lives.