



## Advocates for Ohio's Future

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 10, 2012

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## ADVOCATES FOR OHIO'S FUTURE: STRONG COMMUNITIES CAN REBOUND WITH GOOD POLICY

COLUMBUS – Advocates for Ohio's Future today offered the Senate Finance Committee options for supporting communities as they rebound from recession by strengthening Ohio's public infrastructure in health and other services.

"We are encouraged by the policy direction of this bill as laid out by the Governor and the promise it holds for transforming communities with health care and the delivery of critical services, yet we also recognize that Ohio communities continue to struggle with recession-related challenges," AOF Co-chair Gayle Channing Tenenbaum said. "Even as the official unemployment rate drops, every community is struggling with the impact of underemployment when 3.4 million Ohioans live in households struggling to keep a roof over their heads, put food on their tables, add gas to their cars, and provide health care for their families. The best way to support every region in Ohio is to make sure that our communities rebound from the recession offering more good jobs with decent wages and benefits to people at all levels of income and education."

Channing Tenenbaum said that legislators need only look at the stories and statistics collected by AOF for its OhioSPEAKS story bank ([www.advocatesforohio.org/OhioSPEAKS](http://www.advocatesforohio.org/OhioSPEAKS)) to understand the issues faced in every community by Ohioans struggling to bounce back from the recession.

In the near term, Co-chair Mark Davis said, vital public services must support Ohio's employers and labor market – including food and housing security, health care, mental health and addiction services, and quality child care. "Communities benefit when training and transportation bolster the labor market and workforce," Davis said. "We applaud the state for restoring the rainy day fund to a responsible level, but we have an obligation to speak to the needs of communities in Ohio."

Channing Tenenbaum and Davis laid out a list of investments and restorations based on the membership of Advocates for Ohio's Future:

1. Restore \$6.2 million in non-Medicaid funding for addiction treatment.
2. Invest \$4.5 million in the Ohio Food Purchase and Agricultural Clearance Programs.

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3. Restore \$1.6 million for long-term care services performed by the Area Agencies on Aging.
4. Restore \$7 million during SFY13 in Medicaid home- and community-based reimbursement rates for aide and nursing services.
5. Invest \$15 million of GRF in the Developmental Disabilities Home- and Community-Based Services Waivers.
6. Reinvest \$25 million in work supports for low-income families.
7. Reinstated \$5 million in funding during SFY13 for the AdoptOhio Kids program.
8. Invest \$10 million in Intermediate Care Facilities (ICF) for people with developmental disabilities.
9. Invest \$2 million in mental health consultation and treatment for children and youth who have been victims of trauma.

Channing Tenenbaum acknowledged that during last year's budget debate, Ohio had fewer resources to meet these needs and provide such services. "This year, the budget is balanced, but communities are still struggling," he said. "As the legislature makes strategic investments in Ohio while saving for the unknowns of the future, Advocates for Ohio's Future encourages policy makers to prioritize the investments we've outlined in health, human services, and early care & education – particularly as we develop a more comprehensive list of priorities for the FY14-15 budget."

*Advocates for Ohio's Future works to maintain vital public services – health, human services, and early care & education – at a level that meets people's basic needs and protects our state's most vulnerable populations.*