

## Letter from Greg Kapcar, Chair of Have a Heart Ohio

### Background

On Tuesday, May 5 the Governor's administration announced a \$600-\$900 million hole in the current FY09 budget (this is in addition to three previous cuts to the current budget totaling \$1.9 Billion). The most likely solution in the short term is to use the state's rainy day fund. This creates a severe funding problem in balancing the state's next biennial budget because the entire rainy day fund was used in creating the FY 2010-2011 budget. Before it's all said and done, the 10-11 budget could be short \$3 Billion once revenue projections come out at the end of May. A \$3 Billion shortfall cannot be dealt with by cuts alone without decimating the health and human services safety net by eliminating vital services to Ohioans who need them most.

### **Reconciling a \$3 Billion shortfall through cuts alone would decimate vital health and human services to all Ohioans! What's at stake?**

- Services for abused and neglected children
- Food programs for Ohioans, including children and seniors
- Home nurse visits for at-risk infants
- Services for people with mental illnesses
- Child care services for children
- Health care for uninsured adults
- After-school programs for school-aged children
- Community services for senior citizens
- Reduced financial aid and scholarship programs for college students
- Waiver slots for persons with developmental disabilities
- Kinship supportive services for children
- Care for uninsured adults and community health centers, including family planning, prenatal care and well-child care

The Campaign to Protect Ohio's Future recognizes the difficult decisions and choices Ohio's leaders and policymakers face when crafting the state's 2010-2011 budget. However, the only response to budget shortfalls cannot be to further cut services to Ohio's most vulnerable children, families, seniors, and those struggling to make ends meet during this downturn in the economy.

During difficult economic times, it is even more important to focus resources on local services that keep our workforce strong and help our families hang on. In order to avoid additional cuts and restore funds to services desperately needed by Ohioans, we call on our Governor and Lawmakers to increase revenues to help meet these needs. Ohio's budget cannot be balanced only by cuts. We need to increase state revenues to provide necessary funding for such critical areas as health, education, safety and social services.

The Campaign does not recommend a specific revenue increase but has catalogued some potential revenue increases being considered in our state and others (see attached). Please join the Campaign to Protect Ohio's Future by endorsing our appeal to Ohio's Governor and Legislators to solve the state's fiscal crisis using a balanced approach that includes increasing revenues to provide adequate funding and avoiding further cuts to services that vulnerable Ohioans are relying on!

If you are interested in personally writing the Governor or your state legislators, a sample letter is attached. Send letters to:

Governor Ted Strickland  
Statehouse  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

To find your state Representative or Senator by zip code, go to [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/search.cfm#reps\\_zip](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/search.cfm#reps_zip)

Thank you!

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Public Children Services Association of Ohio