



April 25, 2016

Kansas Senate and House Members

Honorable Members,

I am writing to you today on behalf of the Kansas Interagency Coordinating Council on Early Childhood Developmental Services (SICC). The SICC is an advisory group based in both state and federal law. This council is responsible for advising and assisting the Kansas governor and legislature on matters that impact Kansas families with children, ages birth to five who have, or are at risk for, developmental delays and to ensure that a comprehensive service delivery system of integrated services is available in Kansas for these children.

The Council expresses great concern regarding the budget balancing option that includes the proposal to bond part of the money that Kansas receives under the multistate lawsuit against the major tobacco companies. These funds, known as the Kansas Endowment for Youth (KEY) and the Children's Initiative Fund (CIF), are used to support a significant portion of services to young children, under the age of five, across the state. Although we understand that the bulk of the money would still be earmarked for use to support early childhood programs, the sale of a portion of this revenue to bondholders is not in the best and future interest of children, families, and the state of Kansas. Kansas children should not pay the price for the budget shortfall.

Why is early childhood an important and critical investment? For those young children who attend quality early childhood programs:

- For every \$1 invested there is a \$8.60 return (White House Report, *The Economics of Early Childhood Investments*, 2014)
- Increased readiness for school
- Higher achievement in reading and math
- Higher self-esteem and better social behavior outcomes
- Reduced grade retention in school
- Reduced referral and utilization of special education services
- Higher graduation rates
- Lower crime and incarceration rates
- Lower abuse/neglect charges
- Lower welfare rates
- Higher income
- Increased tax revenues from payroll taxes

Please support Kansas kids by rejecting this proposal. Further, please do not sweep the KEY and CIF into the state general funds and **preserve these dollars as one of Kansas' most impactful and important programs that support Kansas children.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt Connell".

Matt Connell, Chair  
Kansas Coordinating Council On Early Childhood Developmental Services