

June 21, 2017

The Honorable Jack Bergman
U.S. House of Representatives
House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Bergman:

Now that the President has unveiled his full budget proposal, Congress is beginning work on the 2018 budget. President Trump's budget features deep cuts in assistance that helps struggling families afford the basics—food on the table, a roof over their heads, and access to health care—as well as stunning cuts in a range of basic public services and investments in our nation, such as job training, K-12 education, access to college, scientific research, and economic development. At the same time, the President has called for massive tax cuts that will overwhelmingly benefit the wealthiest households and corporations.

Unfortunately, there are troubling signs that some in Congress want to follow the President's lead and put forward a budget plan that calls for cuts in food assistance, health care, and other supports for struggling families; cuts in investments in public services and our productivity and economy; and tax cuts that will benefit high income Americans, leaving others behind and causing big new holes in the nation's finances. Such a budget plan would be bad for Michigan's families and contrary to our values.

Congress should reject these upside-down budget priorities and put the needs of all Michigania families at the top of the agenda. We call upon Michigan's representatives and senators to:

- **Oppose any budget that requires any cuts in key assistance to struggling families.** This includes rejecting any budget that would authorize in a fast-track process (known as reconciliation) that would force cuts in programs such as Medicaid, SNAP (formerly known as food stamps), Supplemental Security Income for those with disabilities and seniors, and TANF. This also includes rejecting a budget that cuts programs that help Michigan residents make ends meet, such as the Community Services Block Grant and the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program.
- **Oppose any budget that paves the way for tax cuts that will lose revenue, including tax cuts that will largely benefit those at the top and corporations.** This includes opposing any budget that would authorize a fast-track process for revenue losing tax cuts and opposing any budget that would allow these reductions to be offset by cuts in programs that provide essential services, like Medicaid and SNAP. Cutting basic food assistance for struggling families or taking health care away from those who need it to pay for tax cuts for the wealthy is irresponsible and reflects a fundamental misunderstanding of what makes our nation thrive.

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- **Oppose any budget that cuts investments in non-defense discretionary programs and work toward a responsible budget deal that will reduce or eliminate the harmful sequestration cuts that otherwise will take full effect in 2018.** Non-defense discretionary programs support key services in Michigan—from education to job training to economic development to important research conducted in our universities and that is key to our nation’s future. Congress on a bipartisan basis has come together in the past to ameliorate the harmful sequestration cuts, but without action those temporary fixes will expire and full sequestration cuts will go into effect in 2018, leaving key investments underfunded.

Michigan’s communities thrive when all families can put food on their table; when workers, parents, children, seniors, and people with disabilities get the health care they need; when schools are not shortchanged; when workers can get the training they need to succeed in today’s economy; and when we invest in all of our neighborhoods. We urge our Members of Congress to craft a budget that upholds our Michigan’s best values.

Sincerely,

ACCESS

Community Action of Allegan County

Council of Baptist Pastors of Detroit and Vicinity

Mary Crittenden, Northeast Michigan Community Mental Health

Rona Darr, LPN, Woodlands Behavioral Healthcare Network

Sandie Essendrup, Dickinson Iron Community Services Agency

Deb Hemgesberg, LMSW, advocate, peer and parent of people affected by this, Atlanta MI

HIV/AIDS Alliance of Michigan

Human Development Commission

Amy Lerlie, Executive Director, Community Action Alger-Marquette

Michigan Association of Community Mental Health Boards

Michigan Community Action

Michigan Disability Rights Coalition

Michigan League for Public Policy

Michigan Oral Health Coalition

Mary Munson, LLP CAADC, Clinical Director, Woodlands Behavioral Healthcare Network

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School-Community Health Alliance of Michigan

Mike Shalley, Michigan Community Action

Mary Swift, CEO, Pathways

United Cerebral Palsy of Michigan (UCP Michigan)

United Way for Southeastern Michigan

Karen Wigand, Board Chair, Menominee Delta Schoolcraft Community Action Agency

(This list is in formation.)