



# ANNUAL REPORT 2016

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Promoting Economic Security  
Through Research and Advocacy

**mlpp**  
MICHIGAN LEAGUE FOR PUBLIC POLICY

## 2016 Highlights: A strong end to a tough year

When it comes to public policy and the needs of Michigan's people, 2016 was one of the most challenging years in recent history. In addition to the expected roster of contested political issues, the state experienced a series of crises that superseded party lines and threatened the economic, educational and physical health of our most vulnerable residents. Urban areas were hit especially hard, and it was clear that immediate and long-term solutions were needed.

The contamination of Flint's drinking water with dangerous lead put Michigan in the national spotlight, as did the disastrous fiscal and structural conditions of the Detroit Public Schools. The ability to understand and deal with Michigan's outdated and deteriorating infrastructure was a major policy test, and it will be a reoccurring challenge for years to come. Sadly, these problems disproportionately impact Michigan's kids and hinder their ability to thrive.

As we have been for more than a century, the League was deeply involved in advocating for solutions. We helped our fellow residents navigate these catastrophes and worked with lawmakers to ensure they were resolved and not repeated. Our research and analyses connected the dots between Michigan's past public policy failures and the deteriorating infrastructure in our state, and our advocacy work pushed for policy change and concrete results.



League CEO Gilda Jacobs and Board Chair Charles Ballard speak with Flint pediatrician Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha, who was honored with the League's Champion for Kids Award at the 2016 public policy forum.

### Success by the Numbers

Communications with members and friends

Website Visitors	137,609
Social Media Followers	7,893
Newsletter Subscribers	5,590
News Media Hits	1,651
Policy Forum Attendees	400
Blogs	61
Emails and Newsletters	32

The League's advocacy efforts helped secure the funding necessary (\$211 million) to help Flint children receive the care and services they need to counteract the water crisis and enable them to thrive. Education and nutrition are key to lessening the developmental damage of lead exposure. This funding will go toward replacing lead pipes in high-risk homes and will fund child care services, nutrition programs and food banks. We also worked to secure an appropriation of \$1.3 million that will be used to protect thousands of Michigan children—all over the state—from the dangers of lead poisoning.

While our work the past year was primarily focused on these pressing issues, 2016 had some bright spots, too, as we achieved some considerable, proactive victories that will go a long way toward securing a better future. During the state budget process, the League's information-based efforts helped secure much-needed funding to address the needs of Flint and

(continued on last page)





## Message from the President & CEO Gilda Z. Jacobs

In 2016, the Michigan League for Public Policy continued our vital role in protecting our state's most vulnerable residents. Our responses to the events of 2016—including the Flint water and Detroit Public Schools crises—demonstrated the importance of our work.

I don't have to tell you there is more to do. Michigan needs us now more than ever, and our commitment is unwavering. I assure you that the League is up to the task; we maintain our strength through a vast network of supporters who believe in our ability to make a difference.

Thanks to you, our advocacy, community engagement and communications activities grow stronger and more effective with each passing day. We've enhanced our role in improving Michigan's public policy, and our reputation for accurate, accessible and timely information remains unrivaled.

The League's vision and values remain steadfast in these tough political times. We will keep fighting to protect affordable healthcare, invest in and improve education for all students, eliminate barriers to food assistance, increase child care access and affordability, end mass incarceration, and support working families with fair wages, improved leave policies and constructive tax credits.

Even in a difficult political environment, we are making headway. Amidst unprecedented challenges in 2016, the League experienced significant successes, as detailed in this report's highlights. We overcame many obstacles to improve the lives of Michigan's children, families, workers and seniors. It was hard work, and our perseverance is due in large part to you.

Our diverse and talented board continues to keep the League relevant and well-positioned on all policy fronts. The League's board currently includes a former budget director, a former director of strategy for Governor Rick Snyder, three former lawmakers, a former state Treasurer, the former director of the Department of Labor and Economic Growth, as well as economists, policy experts, educators, business leaders, and legal and nonprofit leaders from across the state.

Our staff is dedicated and growing, thanks to a \$300,000 grant from the Kresge Foundation and a \$300,000 grant from the Max M. & Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation. These grants are helping fund two new health policy analysts and a new Kids Count research associate. The Michigan Health Endowment Fund also provided a grant that will be used to provide in-depth policy analysis of Medicaid's Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Program.

We are grateful for this outpouring of generosity. Every dollar helps us prepare for the big changes and intense policy and budget fights that are coming down the pike in 2017.

Thank you for contributing to the League. Moving forward, our efforts are more important than ever. It's up to us—you and me—to provide a strong voice for the Michiganders who might otherwise be forgotten or ignored. The more we work together, the more access to opportunity we will create—for all of Michigan's people.

Warmest wishes,

Gilda Z. Jacobs

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# League's Policy Agenda: Building a Stronger Michigan

## THE RESULTS MICHIGAN NEEDS

A 21ST CENTURY SKILLED WORKFORCE

A FLOURISHING ECONOMY AND INCREASED COMPETITIVENESS

ADEQUATE STATE REVENUES TO INVEST IN PROVEN SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDED TO GROW THE ECONOMY

EQUITY AND OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL OF THE STATE'S CHILDREN AND FAMILIES, ELIMINATING BARRIERS BY INCOME, RACE AND PLACE

### Strengthen Families with Young Children

Increase access to safe, high-quality child care

Enroll low-income 3-year-olds in preschool

Expand home visiting and other support for parents of children ages 0-3

Fund programs to find and help young children with disabilities

Prevent child abuse and neglect

### Skills for the New Economy

Adequately fund public schools, community colleges and universities

Invest in early intervention as an alternative to mandatory retention of 3rd graders

Expand alternatives for young people to get a high school diploma

Strengthen adult education and training

Provide more financial aid for low-income college students

### Work and Economic Opportunity for All

Support work by expanding the state Earned Income Tax Credit and refundable child care credits

Reduce extreme poverty and homelessness by removing barriers to assistance

Encourage savings by revising asset tests for public and food assistance

Strengthen family-friendly workplace policies

Revise parole and reentry policies so prisoners can reconnect to the community

### Healthy Kids and Families

Fund prenatal, primary care and mental health services

Reduce infant mortality disparities and exposure to lead and other toxins

Provide dental care to all low-income children

Expand sources of clean, renewable energy

### Strong Revenues and Smart Investments

Support a progressive income tax that adequately funds state services

Modernize the state's sales tax to cover selected services and enforce taxes on internet sales

Support road and infrastructure improvements funded with tax changes that least affect low-wage workers

Annually review tax expenditures



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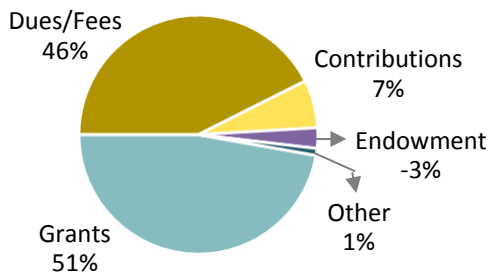
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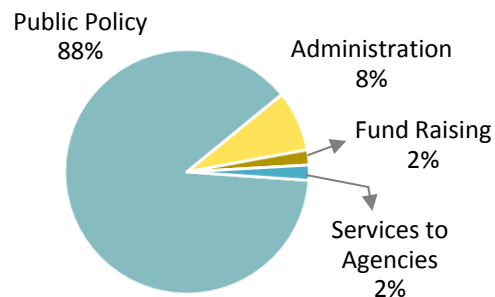


## Sources of Funds and Expenditures—12 months ended Dec. 31, 2015 (audited)

### Sources of Funds — \$2,061,717



### Expenditures — \$2,957,121





(2016 Highlights continued from page 1)

lead poisoning statewide, the expansion of Michigan's Healthy Kids Dental program, and significant investments in child care.

In addition to these budget wins, a lot of the big wins from the past year came during the usually contentious Lamé Duck legislative session. This shows that our issues can be bipartisan with the right strategy and approach. The League's persistence on several big issues, spanning years in some cases, achieved some encouraging results, and we will keep battling in the year ahead.

Highlights of the League's year in review include these notable accomplishments:

- State investment for the federal Heat and Eat program to provide an additional \$76 or so more per month to put food on the table for 338,000 Michigan families, seniors and persons with disabilities.
- Improving school suspension and expulsion policies and implementing restorative practices to help kids stay in school.
- \$210.8 million in state funds (leveraging \$42.5 million in federal funds) over two budget years to help children in Flint receive the care and services they need to thrive, including \$25 million to replace lead pipes in high-risk homes, \$8 million for child care services and nearly \$2 million for nutrition programs and food banks;
- \$1.3 million to protect thousands more Michigan children from the danger of lead poisoning;
- Stronger, healthier teeth for 131,000 low-income children in Kent, Oakland and Wayne counties, with the long-awaited expansion of the state's Healthy Kids Dental program;
- \$6.1 million to strengthen and reunify families and keep more children safe from neglect and abuse;
- \$15.8 million to ensure more children will have high-quality child care while their parents work.
- We will continue to strive for progress on these issues in 2017 and beyond, and many other policy battles lie ahead. But for more than a century, the League's nonpartisan, solution-oriented approach has consistently improved public policy in Michigan, and with your support, that will continue in 2017.

## Our Mission

To ensure economic security and well-being for all people in Michigan through policy change.

## Vision

Michigan residents, families and children from all races, places and income levels will have equal access to economic, health and educational opportunities.

## Values

- Honesty, Integrity and Nonpartisanship
- Social and Economic Justice, Fairness and Opportunity
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- Democratic Process and the Dignity of All

## League Earns Four Stars as a Charitable Organization

Charity Navigator, America's largest independent charity evaluator, awarded the League four stars—the highest rating possible—as a charitable organization.

The nonprofit, independent group rates charities based on financial performance, accountability and transparency.

"Michigan League for Public Policy's coveted 4-star rating puts it in a very select group of high-performing charities," according to Ken Berger, president and CEO, Charity Navigator. "Out of the thousands of nonprofits Charity Navigator evaluates, only one out of four earns 4 stars—a rating that, now, with our new Accountability and Transparency metrics, demands even greater rigor, responsibility and commitment to openness."

