



February 11, 2016

The Honorable Ryan Smith
Ohio House of Representatives

Dear Representative Smith:

I am asking you to support the Smart Ohio K-8 grade financial literacy proposal.

As the coordinator of the Ohio State University Extension teen financial literacy program, *Real Money. Real World.*, I am witness to state-wide need for financial literacy instruction in our schools. Through this program, over 20,000 teens in the 76 counties experience hands-on money management every year. Unfortunately, these teens often lack basic money management concepts that can, and should be, taught in early childhood.

Unfortunately, Ohio's elementary-aged children do not receive consistent or effective money management messages at home or at school and all Ohioans pay the price.

Data reflects our need. The 2012 National Financial Capacity Study revealed that Ohio ranks 4th worst in the country in understanding basic financial concepts and ability to make sound financial decisions.

No one would argue that our children need to learn and practice savvy money management concepts, but now is the time to take action and Dr. Julie Heath and The University of Cincinnati through the Economics Center, is providing a solution. The Smart Ohio Proposal focuses on providing young children the foundational skills needed to make responsible money choices – skills they will carry into adulthood.

I strongly support Dr. Heath's proposal to equip 500 K-8 teachers with the Smart Model curriculum. Doing so will test the program and get thousands of Ohio's children off to a solid start in managing money and becoming the savvy productive citizens and professionals we need to succeed in our highly competitive world.

Thank you for all you do for the citizens of Ohio,

Kathy Michelich
Extension Educator, Family and Consumer Sciences
Real Money. Real World. State Signature Program Leader

michelich.1@osu.edu

<http://realmoneyrealworld.osu.edu/>