



KNOX COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF JOB & FAMILY SERVICES

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Testimony by Matthew Kurtz, Director of Knox County Department of Job and Family Services and President of Public Children Services Association of Ohio Board of Directors

Workforce Subcommittee of Senate Finance Committee

May 19, 2015 11:00 a.m.

Chairman Beagle, Vice Chair Williams and members of Senate Finance Workforce Subcommittee thank you for your time today. I am Matthew Kurtz, Director of Knox County Department of Job & Family Services and President of the Public Children Service Association of Ohio. The Agency I lead is a combined agency that has responsibility for Public Assistance, Child Support, Workforce Development and Child Protective Services. We are currently giving much thought to Person Centered Case Management program and how we can improve our outcomes with individuals on public assistance. It may surprise you to know that one model we are heavily considering is based on the work that we do with children and families in our Child Protective Services division. In that unit we have teams of professionals from all the different service providers who are working with the child and family. This may include Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, Alcohol and Addiction Services, Education and Probation Services. These teams meet initially to work with the child and family to develop a case plan. Then the team meets regularly to review with the family what progress they have made on their plan. We have found this to be an effective way to ensure that each case has the maximum potential for success by bringing all the resource providers to the table regularly. What I want to point out about this approach is that it is resource intensive. It involves a great deal of time on the part of our caseworkers, as well as other community professionals to be effectively engaged with the child and family. In most of our Children Services agencies, the average caseload size can run anywhere from 10 to 15 cases per worker. In our Public Assistance division, the case load sizes are much larger than that; some in the hundreds of cases per worker. I point that out to let you know that the success of the Person Centered Case Management program will largely depend on the amount of resources allocated to counties to employ these case managers.

Also, I want to point out that our Children Services agencies are struggling with their Child and Family Centered Case Management efforts for this very reason. Helping people work on life issues is time intensive, and time, as you know, is

costly. Since 2009, funding for Child Protection has decreased dramatically (see Attachment). This decrease comes from two fronts.

First, cuts in State GRF have represented an almost \$14 million impact on county child protection agencies. Currently, the State of Ohio only provides 9% of the funding for Child Protection in Ohio. The remaining 91% comes from Federal and Local Sources at 39% and 52% respectively. That makes Ohio 50th in the nation for state support of child protection. Nationally, the average investment from states is 43%, with only 11% from local funds.

Second, losses from the Tangible Personal Property Tax phase out have amounted to almost \$40 million to Children Services Levies. So that is \$53 million in cuts. With another \$17 million expected to be lost with the final phase out of TPPT proposed in the Governor's budget that would be nearly \$70 million less in our system than in 2009.

Sadly, these reductions have come at a time when the demands on our agencies have been increasing in both number and intensity. The ongoing increase in drug abuse, that has reached epidemic numbers among opiate users, has caused ours to be a system on the verge of crisis. When you hear about heroin overdoses, meth lab raids and other drug offenses, more often than not those involved are parents of young children. Those children, at best, need our care while their parents put their lives back together. Ultimately, for many children our agencies must find them new families.

This is why we are requesting \$20 million in each year of the State Fiscal Year 16-17 budget. We would request that the additional funds be distributed in two segments. First, we would like to see an additional \$100,000 added to the base allocation for every county. This \$8.8 million would help to address the disparate funding between counties that have a children services levy and those that don't; and would assist in addressing significant workforce gaps in public children services agencies. The increase of \$100,000 would allow our child protection agencies to add additional staff to provide the Child and Family Centered Case management that is so crucial to our success. We would request that the remaining \$11.2 million be allocated via the State Child Protection Allocation formula. This additional state funding would allow county Child Protection Agencies to continue to intervene in the lives of Ohio's most precious resource; our children and allow us to focus on increasing permanency for their lives as a forever family is necessary for one's success in adulthood.

Some of the value of having more state funding is that it allows us to be flexible in our approach to the issues in a family. Recently, we had a mom who was working on staying drug free and had recently been reunited with her children. Her children had been removed for some months while she was in treatment. Her caseworker at our agency was following up on her regularly and swab testing her as documentation

that she was working her plan. She also had the support of a caseworker at our local Drug and Alcohol Counseling Center Weekly and through other local funding she had the assistance of a family aide who was there a few times a week to assist with household challenges and be a life coach of sorts to mom. These caseworkers along with mom's probation officer and the children's mental health counselor all sit down weekly to be sure that mom and family are on track. Though I can't guarantee you that mom will not relapse, I do feel that we have all the supports to be sure mom has all the opportunity to succeed or know if the safety of the children are at risk. This situation is only possible because my agency and the Mental Health agency have levy funding that provide these needed workers to support this family. Many county agencies are not in the same position and are stretched just to meet timeframes with investigating allegations. So you see why additional funding to the system is so crucial.

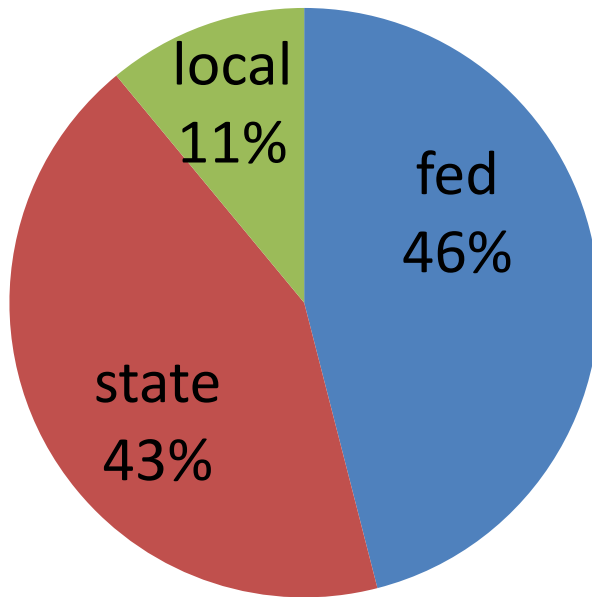
One final comment, my combined agency also is responsible for Adult Protective Services, so I wanted to thank you for the additional \$10 million for that program as well as for the additional \$10 million for Child Protection in the last MBR. The Adult Protection funds are allowing all our agencies to build a stronger foundation for our Adult Protective Services programs. The challenge going forward will be to meet the increased demand that continues as the number of Ohio seniors continues to grow. The \$3.2 million included in Governor's '16 & '17 budget will be completely washed away by loses Senior Levies will experience through the TPPT loss. So we are again looking at a system that is stressed by increasing need and eroding funding. Sadly, the additional \$10 million for Child Protection in the MBR was not distributed in a way that allowed all agencies to address permanency. It was, rather, distributed by a grant program that funded only 57 of 76 applications not having nearly the broad reaching effect for which we had hoped.

The challenges to our agencies are great but we believe that with increased support from you we can continue to provide for the safety and permanency of the children of Ohio.

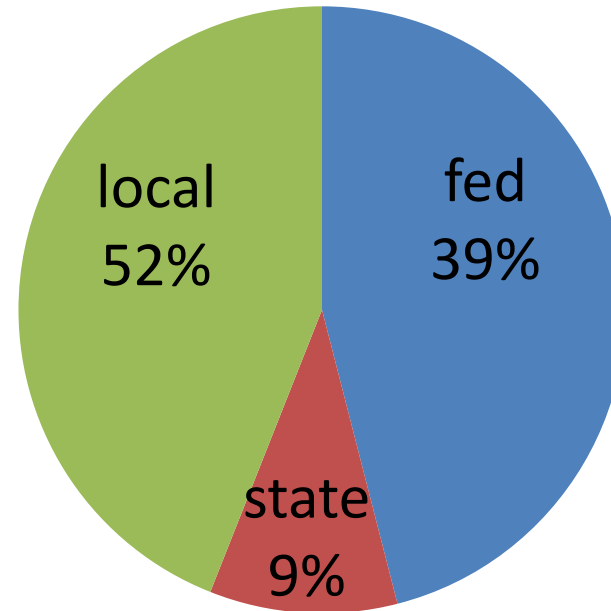


CHILD PROTECTION FUNDING

National



Ohio



NATIONAL: SPARC's [Child Welfare Financing in the United States](#), Feb. 2013; STATE: PCSAO Factbook, SFY 2013



OHIO CHILD PROTECTION FUNDING

<u>\$1,006,793,629</u>	—————→	Total Cost
\$394,131,470	—————→	Federal (39%)
\$518,993,007	—————→	Local (52%)
\$93,670,643	—————→	State (9%)



- 9% of the total cost of child protection is State funding but not all goes to county PCSAs
 - **4.7% (\$44,241,433) is for direct services via county PCSAs**
 - 5.3% (\$49,429,210) is for statewide efforts: Adoption Subsidies, SACWIS, trainings, other



LOSS OF STATE FUNDING SPECIFICALLY FOR CHILD PROTECTION

Fiscal Year	2009	2014	Loss
State Child Protection Allocation	\$57,723,143	\$43,905,320	- \$13,817,823
TPP for Children Services Levies	\$52,139,746	\$12,374,183	- \$39,765,563
TOTAL	\$109,862,889	\$56,279,503	- \$53,583,386





- **48.7% reduction in state funding** (SCPA & TPPT) from 2009 – 2013
- BUT Child Protection Custody Cases have NOT reduced, but **INCREASED by 8%** and are more difficult (opiates, human trafficking, high multi-system needs like mental health and DD)
 - 1/1/10: 11,721 children in custody
 - 1/1/14: 12,679 children in custody



TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN SERVED IN 2013

250,000+ calls of child abuse/neglect



100,139 screened-in reports investigated or assessed

79,110 Traditional Response



21,029 Alternative Response



12,679 children in out-of-home care

7,555 reunified



835 emancipated

2,519 children available for adoption



1,300 children adopted



INVEST IN CHILD PROTECTION

\$20 Million increase to the State Child Protection Allocation

- \$8.8M allocated equally to all 88 counties
- \$11.2M allocated via the SCPA formula to all counties with a focus on improving permanency outcomes

(SCPA Formula: 12% divided equally among all counties; 48% distributed based on total number of children under 18; 40% based on poverty level)