



OHIO JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES DIRECTORS' ASSOCIATION

37 West Broad Street, Suite 1120 Columbus, Ohio 43215

Ohio House Finance Committee
Interested Party Testimony on HB 110
April 15, 2021

Joel Potts, Executive Director, Ohio Job and Family Services Directors' Association

Chair Oelslager, Vice-Chair Plummer, Ranking Member Crawley and Members of the House Finance Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to provide interested party testimony on House Bill 110. My name is Joel Potts, and I am the executive director of the Ohio Job and Family Services Directors' Association (OJFSDA).

OJFSDA represents county department of job and family service (JFS) agencies who administer cash assistance, food assistance/SNAP, childcare, Medicaid (including long-term care, children's health insurance and services to aged, blind and disabled) and adult protective services. Many also serve as the child protective services, child support and workforce development agencies. I would like to draw your attention to four topics that are integral to the efficient and effective administration of Ohio's JFS system:

1. LOCAL PROGRAM SUPPORT (GRF Line Items 600521 and 655522)

OJFSDA continues to urge an additional allocation of \$7.7M in local program support for counties to maintain and improve timeliness and accuracy in case processing. As shown in the points below, even without the current public health emergency and its corresponding economic impact (which has led to increased caseloads across programs), these resources are necessary to ensure program integrity and timely services to the residents of Ohio. This investment will be critical given the estimated 3.45 million Medicaid recipients whose eligibility will need to be redetermined after the federally declared health emergency is lifted.

Ohio's local program support appropriations are the backbone of county operations, providing core funding for the local SNAP and Medicaid programs. It primarily funds front line services impacting clients and their cases. This includes eligibility determinations, quality assurance reviews, fraud investigations, information verification and transportation. Resources in these line items help stabilize families across the spectrum of JFS programs including child protection and workforce development and enable the state to draw down additional federal match.

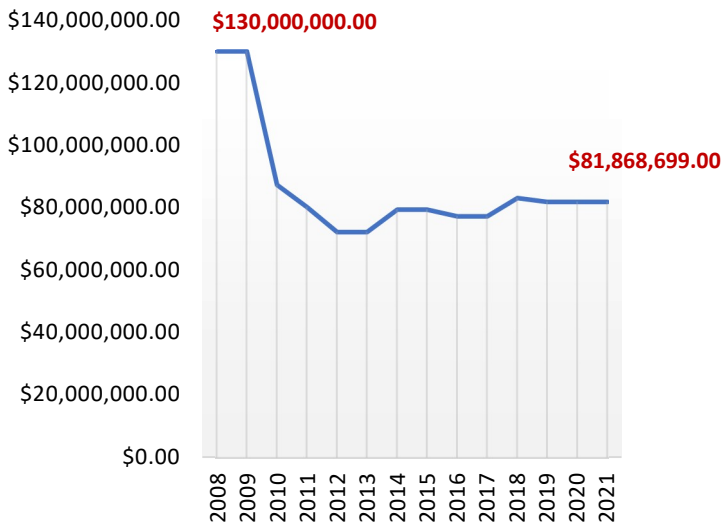
Local Program Support and Participation Trends

- In **2008**, Ohio's local program support appropriations equaled **\$53.70 per** combined SNAP/Medicaid participant.
- In **2020**, funding equaled just **\$19.35** per person served locally in the SNAP and Medicaid programs.
- **Post COVID-19, funding per person is trending to \$17.79, which is the lowest the state has ever provided.**
- If funding levels had remained the same as they were in 2008, we would be receiving \$165M more today in state general revenue than we are projected to receive in the 2022-2023 executive budget proposal.

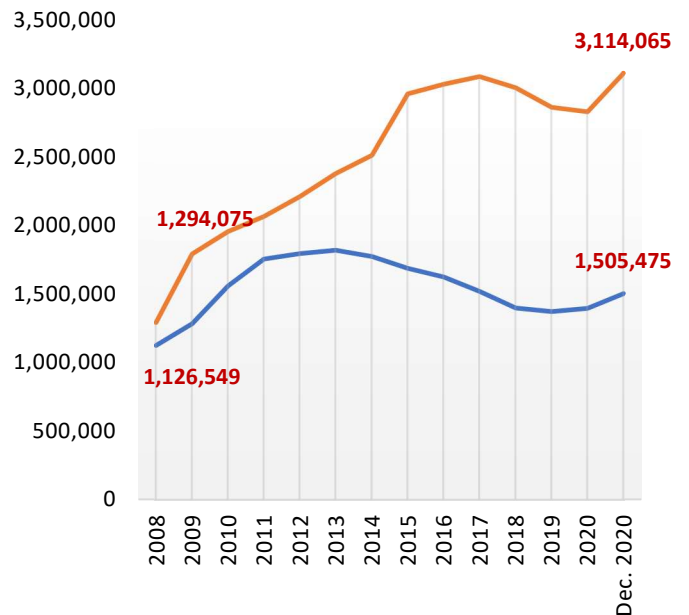
Because the local program support line items have not been maintained at sufficient levels, county JFS agencies face challenges in:

- Maintaining timely completion of redeterminations and initial applications for SNAP and Medicaid.
- Performing significant fraud investigations.
- Meeting federal mandates on performance measures.
- Providing quality customer service.
- Sustaining robust welfare to work programs.

YEAR	Local Program Support Line Items	Yearly Participation Averages	
	600521 & 655522	Medicaid	SNAP
2008	\$ 130,000,000	1,294,075	1,126,549
2009	\$ 130,000,000	1,795,023	1,284,289
2010	\$ 87,310,316	1,957,491	1,559,983
2011	\$ 80,223,023	2,068,876	1,756,386
2012	\$ 72,200,721	2,213,983	1,797,559
2013	\$ 72,200,721	2,382,265	1,821,827
2014	\$79,400,721	2,515,581	1,776,100
2015	\$79,400,721	2,963,843	1,690,139
2016	\$77,200,721	3,034,288	1,626,041
2017	\$77,200,721	3,088,468	1,520,331
2018	\$83,119,931	3,007,397	1,399,579
2019	\$81,868,699	2,865,431	1,374,254
2020	\$81,868,699	2,833,308	1,396,715
Post COVID Snapshot December 2020		3,114,065	1,505,475
State Projections 2022		3,450,000	



Line Items 600521 & 655522



— SNAP Participants — Medicaid Participants

2. ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES (APS) (GRF Line Item 600534)

OJFSDA appreciates the House's investment of \$1.49M per year to protect Ohio's elderly from abuse. The additional funds would provide each county with base funding of \$65,000 per year. This will help support timely and thorough investigations into suspected elder abuse, neglect and exploitation.

OJFSDA appreciates the House proposing an additional investment to protect Ohio's elderly from abuse. Ohio law designates county JFS agencies as the lead entity to receive, investigate and evaluate reports of elder abuse, exploitation, and neglect. Over the last ten years Ohio's elderly population has been increasing rapidly, triggering a growing need for services. The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services reported that county APS investigations increased over 68 percent between 2018 and 2020. Ohio recently changed APS laws to increase the number of mandatory reporters and broaden the scope of cases that must be investigated but provided no new resources to support this requirement.

3. CHILD SUPPORT (GRF Line Item 600502)

Maintain the Child Support investment included in both the House and Executive budget proposals

OJFSDA greatly appreciates the House's support for the proposed increase in investment of \$2.9M for Ohio's child support system.

4. CHILD PROTECTION (GRF Line Item 600523)

OJFSDA continues to support the Public Children Service Association of Ohio's request for an additional \$50M per year to the State Child Protection Allocation to help county children services agencies implement the newly established Kinship Support Program and the federal Family First Act.

We are thankful for the continuation of the 2020-2021 investments in children services. However, the system is undertaking an unprecedented scope of change sparked by the two policies below. A true transformation of children services will require resources for the front line county workers. Without these additional dollars, local costs for the child protection system will increase and implementation will be extremely difficult.

- Ohio created a new Kinship Support Program at the end of last year for caregivers with temporary custody. While the executive budget includes new dollars to cover the costs of the state portion of the program, it does not include new dollars to cover the increased cost to counties. If only half of the kinship caregivers become licensed, the cost to counties will be an additional \$37M per year.
- Ohio will implement the federal Family First Act, which focuses on providing families with needed services to prevent children from entering foster care. State resources are needed for the ongoing match of the prevention services, and to address capacity of the services across the state so that children in every Ohio county have the same opportunity to remain with their family rather than enter foster care, regardless of local resources.
- We appreciate the partial restoration of the TANF funded Kinship Caregiver program, which is designed to alleviate some of the expenses assumed by informal and formal kinship caregivers.