

September 17, 2021

Please place letter below on the official record

Dear Board of Commissioner's

I am very troubled by your vote to defund Parenting Communities, currently being run through the Benzie-Leelanau Health Department. I am 89 years old, a mother and a grandmother. I voted for the millage because it is important that ALL families that need services that promote developmentally appropriate, comprehensive care should be entitled to receive the support they need. Making sure our most venerable children and families receive the interventions needed will help create a better environment for us all. This is what great communities do, they support one another. If you defund the millage, these families will be left to fall through the cracks. Child health and well-being are tied to parental health. Without the home visitors, designed to give parents the support they need, parents will have nowhere to turn, leaving children with an increased risk of experiencing neglect and abuse. We all will suffer the consequences of your actions.

Our jobs at any age is to support children however we can. I voted for this millage as did the majority of voters. You do not have the right to take the decision of the majority away.

I would ask you to look at the data that funding early childhood is far less costly than the alternative which will cost 3 to 4 times as much down the road.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bonnie Orr". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Bonnie Orr