

September 17, 2021

Dear Leelanau County Commissioners:

I am a board member at Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Grand Traverse Region (DPIL GTR). We have been working with the Leelanau Health department and Leelanau early childhood educators to bring our program to Leelanau County. After the last successful millage it had been approved and we were very excited to have Leelanau County as part of our organization.

Our mission is to bring books into the homes of children ages birth to their fifth birthday through our book gifting program, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. This program provides books delivered to the child, in their own name once a month until they graduate out of the program on their fifth birthday. There is no cost to the parent but our affiliate is responsible to support this child while enrolled in the program. Our organization pays \$2.05 per book. In exchange, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library prints the books, chooses an age-appropriate book, and mails it to the child once per month. At the end of one year, the child will have 12 books in their own family library. If they are enrolled from birth, they will receive 60! The millage that was supporting us is the same that was recently terminated. This will be a brand new program specifically for the young child in Leelanau County.

Research has proven that "book readiness" is one of the most important gifts we can give a young child. It helps a child to have a successful kindergarten experience and be reading well for the third grade mandated tests. It is an investment in our youngest society that has long reaching effects.

Our board and organization is run by volunteers. We are charged with raising funds to support our children in our region through grants, fundraisers and millages, such as this one. We are also charged with enrolling the children. There is no monetary goal for our organization to sponsor this program. It is our sole mission to bring books to children so they are read to as infants, toddlers and children.

I firmly believe that this should not be a political fight but one for the young child so they may grow up to become a successful adult!

Sincerely,
Jennifer Abel
Dolly Parton's Imagination Library GTR
Board member