

9-19-2021

Dear Leelanau County Board of Commissioners,

I am writing to you today to show support for the Early Childhood Mileage. I was terribly saddened to hear the direction the board is looking to take in regards to the mileage for two reasons;

Number 1: I work in the early childhood field. I am on the front lines everyday and I can tell you our families and our teachers need this. Our children need us to invest in them and invest in their futures. When we invest in our children, we are investing in the future of us all. Families need help, they need support, they need to know where they can go when they are struggling, they need people that know and understand child development fighting for them, and they need their county board of commissioners to follow the will of the voters.

Number 2: Whether or not you agree with this mileage, it was voted on by the citizens of this county and a majority of those who voted wanted this mileage in place. You can argue that only 17% of the people who voted, voted yes on this mileage but that doesn't matter. This was passed by the voters. If you or your constituents don't agree with this outcome then you should encourage them to vote in the next election. Those who didn't vote in the election for the Early Childhood Mileage had the chance to vote - when they chose not to vote they sent the message to the county and the board they were fine with however the vote went. These constituents had the chance to vote and they already gave their answer. There is no requirement that a certain number of voters have to show up for the vote. Majority Rules.

When we don't agree on issues, we need to have a discussion and compromise; we can't just erase the other side's view because you believe something different. I spend my day teaching our youngest children to understand others viewpoints and listen to ideas that are different from theirs. It is my hope that we can spread love and understanding in this world. It is my hope that you can put aside your petty issues and focus on helping people, helping families. Families who are already struggling to keep their homes, find places to rent, pay their bills, buy groceries, and afford childcare. If there is a surplus of money, let's find a creative way to spend that money that will best benefit the families in this county. We need our young families to keep this county running - to run our gas stations, our restaurants, our wineries, our schools. This county is becoming a retirement location, a place for second homes, for our elderly... we also need to consider how to keep our young families here. Why not use the surplus of the mileage to help create childcare facilities in which we are greatly lacking. Why not use the surplus money to increase wages for our early childhood staff so they don't have to work two and three jobs just to pay their bills. Why not come up with a creative compromise? It is my hope you can do that, afterall, I work with 3 and 4 year olds that find ways to work together, so I know you can too.

Thank you for your time,
Tasha Milliron