

From: [Michelle Crocker](#)
To: [Board of Commissioners](#)
Cc: [Chet Janik](#); [Alison Middleton](#)
Subject: FW: Early Childhood Millage
Date: Monday, September 20, 2021 2:35:08 PM

Please see email below for Public Comment.

Michelle

From: Michele Hulsey <vmhulsey@bellsouth.net>
Sent: Monday, September 20, 2021 12:15 PM
To: Michelle Crocker <mcrocker@leelanau.gov>
Subject: FW: Early Childhood Millage

Please include in the public comments the attached letter I sent to Commissioner Bunek. I have written similar letters to the rest of the Board. Thank you.

V. Michele Hulsey
10836 E. Fort Rd.
Suttons Bay, MI 49682
phone: 502-417-6954
vmhulsey@bellsouth.net

From: Michele Hulsey <vmhulsey@bellsouth.net>
Sent: Monday, September 20, 2021 9:15 AM
To: 'wbunek@leelanau.gov' <wbunek@leelanau.gov>
Subject: Early Childhood Millage

Dear Commissioner Bunek,

I write as a concerned citizen of Leelanau County about your proposal to reduce the early childhood millage to .000. I am greatly concerned about abandoning any early childhood development services that the citizenry has chosen to provide and equally outraged at your statements about overturning a poor decision by voters. Based on those statements, some might determine your election to office a poor voter decision that should be overturned? Would that we had the voter recall option that California has! While some citizens may remain opposed to the millage, the public voted the millage in using our democratic process. You owe that vote your respect just as those of us who might not have voted for you are required to respect the will of the voters who did.

I understand your duty to steward our community resources based upon study of the relevant data, public opinion, expert advice, and the short and long term consequences of your decisions. However, I read none of that in the accounts of the Board's deliberations on this matter.

You surely must be unaware that research on the effectiveness of high quality early childhood

programs is abundant and indicates that parents and children supported in early childhood have:

- Lower substance abuse rates
- Half as many criminal arrests
- Better problem solving skills
- Lower divorce rates
- Less depression
- Lower teen pregnancy rates
- Lower retention/special education needs
- Higher graduation rates
- More likelihood to attend college
- Higher lifelong earnings

As an elected official, you owe your support to all the families and children of Leelanau County. The highest rate of return-on-investment in early childhood development comes from investing as early as possible. A small investment now pays huge dividends later. You cannot be ignorant of the fact that our economic future depends on building a highly educated and skilled workforce.

A bi-partisan community needs assessment recommended the services the millage is intended to fund. While the Pandemic delayed the start of these services, I understand that a recent report from the Health Dept clearly demonstrates that parents are ready and eager to engage now that home visits and group gatherings are safe. Thus, the millage should be adequately funded and the services and programs given an opportunity to succeed before you shut them down.

Please heed the will of your constituents and withdraw this proposal!

Thank you,

V. Michele Hulsey
10836 E. Fort Rd.
Suttons Bay, MI 49682
phone: 502-417-6954
vmhulsey@bellsouth.net