

**From:** [Natalie Wilson](#)  
**To:** [Clerk; Melinda Lautner](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment re: Early Childhood Millage  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 21, 2021 2:02:49 PM

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Dear Commissioner Lautner,

Cc: Commissioners Bunek, Rushton, Robbins, Algaier, Soutas-Little, and Wessel

I am a resident of Kasson Township. I urge you to reconsider your vote to set the millage rate for the Health Department's Parenting Communities program to 0.0. Instead, set the millage at the rate authorized by voters.

I support fully funding the early childhood programs. I no longer have young children at home, but I voted FOR the millage because I recognize the long-term value of supporting the development of young children and supporting their families' efforts to raise them to be healthy, happy, and productive grown-ups.

Services offered and participation in the Parenting Communities program have been growing. The activities and services offered are targeted based on parent surveys to provide maximum benefit to Leelanau's children and families. There is even a waiting list! Please don't cut off the program just as momentum is building.

I also find it deeply disturbing that a vote to set the millage rate to 0.0 would represent overturning the will of the majority of voters who very specifically authorized funding for early childhood programs. To defund the programs would be anti-democratic in the extreme. The reasoning that the millage was not authorized by a majority of the county's voters due to turnout rate for the 2019 election is critically flawed. I urge you to resist going down that path because it's a slippery slope indeed. Elections in this country have always (properly) accepted that the winning person or proposal is the one that receives the majority of votes cast in the election, regardless of participation rate. The same math that was used to say that only 17% of the county's voters voted for the early childhood millage indicates that only 44% of District 7 voters cast ballots to reelect you (1243 votes among 2852 registered voters). I don't, and surely you don't, believe your re-election was invalid because you didn't receive votes from the majority of registered voters, a group that is even smaller than the number of eligible voters!

Thank you for your consideration.

Natalie Wilson  
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Cedar