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TO: The Honorable Detroit City Council

FROM: David Whitaker, Director
Legislative Policy Division Staff



DATE: August 27, 2025

RE: **RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND STATE OF MICHIGAN CONTINUING GRANT SUPPORT FOR THE FOCUS: HOPE HEAD START PROGRAM.**

City Council Coleman A. Young II has requested the Legislative Policy Division (LPD) to produce a resolution in support of the federal government and the state of Michigan continuing grant support for the Focus: HOPE Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

Please contact our office if we can provide any further assistance.

A Resolution by Council Member Coleman A. Young II

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND STATE OF MICHIGAN CONTINUING GRANT SUPPORT FOR THE FOCUS HOPE HEAD START PROGRAM.

- WHEREAS** Focus: HOPE has proudly served Detroit families through its Center for Children since 1989, and has provided Head Start services since 2014, offering high-quality early childhood education, nutritious meals, health screenings, and family support; and
- WHEREAS** At the end of July 2025, Focus: HOPE was forced to close its Early Head Start and Head Start sites after \$6 million in federal funding was not renewed; and
- WHEREAS** The federal Administration of Children and Families (ACE) under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has not provided a reason for the denial of Focus: HOPE's grant application, which is particularly perplexing because it was the only organization that was applying to provide these services for children in the ZIP codes they are servicing;¹ and
- WHEREAS** The decision to end funding for these programs means that nearly 450 children in low-income families will go without free childcare and early education, and more than 100 Head Start staff were laid off;² and
- WHEREAS** The sudden, unexplained loss of funding has been highly disruptive to the development of the effected children as well as for working families who are now left scrambling to find an alternative source of quality education and childcare; and
- WHEREAS** According to the University of North Carolina Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute (FPG), one of the oldest and largest multidisciplinary centers devoted to the study of children and families, children who participated in their early childhood education programs tend to attain higher levels of education, be in school or have a skilled job, and be self-sufficient while also being less likely to develop physical and mental health issues, less likely to abuse substances, and less likely to become a teenage parent;³ and
- WHEREAS** The benefits of early childhood education programs are particularly beneficial to children from families experiencing low household income, children with disabilities, and dual language learners; and
- WHEREAS** Not only do early childhood education programs tend to result in higher lifetime incomes for participants, they also produce a significant return on investment due to the reduction in the need for remedial education, reduced reliance on government benefit programs, reduced interaction with the criminal justice system, and reduced need for medical care;⁴ and

¹ <https://www.chalkbeat.org/detroit/2025/08/13/focus-hope-head-start-program-closes-after-federal-funding-loss/>

² <https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2025/08/13/detroit-head-start-closure-focus-hope-no-child-care/85626220007/>

³ <https://abc.fpg.unc.edu/follow-up-studies/>

⁴ <https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/mje/2025/05/02/investing-in-the-future-the-economic-benefits-of-early-childhood-education/>; https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/docs/the_economics_of_early_childhood_investments.pdf

WHEREAS Early childhood education programs like the ones provided by Focus: HOPE are vital to the development and welfare of our youth, which the Detroit City Charter rightly describes as “our most precious treasure;” **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED That the Detroit City Council hereby strongly urges the U.S. Administration of Children and Families and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to continue providing grant funding to the Focus: HOPE Head Start and Early Head Start programs; **NOW BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED That the Detroit City Council hereby strongly urges the Michigan legislature to identify and provide sources of funding that will allow the Focus: HOPE Head Start and Early Head Start programs to continue to provide their essential services to Detroit’s children; **NOW BE IT FINALLY**

RESOLVED That the Detroit City Clerk provide a copy of this resolution to Mayor Mike Duggan, the Detroit delegations of both the Michigan State House and Senate, Governor Gretchen Whitmer, U.S. House of Representatives Members Rashida Tlaib and Shri Thanedar, Andrew Gradison, Acting Assistant Secretary of the Administration for Children and Families, and Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., Director of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.