



184 N. Lancaster Street, Athens, Ohio 45701
(740) 797-2523 1-800-762-3775

<http://jfs.athenscountygovernment.com>

COMMISSIONERS: Lenny Eliason, Larry Payne, Mark Sullivan

DIRECTOR: Jack Frech

An Equal Opportunity Employer / Service Provider

For Immediate Release

May 6, 2011

Contact: Nick Claussen, Community Relations Coordinator

(740) 797-2523

Ohio House budget hurts poor families

The two-year state budget proposal passed this week by the Ohio House of Representatives does nothing to help Ohioans in poverty and in many cases will just make things worse for poor children and families.

“At a time when we have seen an increase in wealth by the richest Ohioans and an increase in the number of people living in poverty, we have continued to grant tax cuts to the families who are living in luxury,” said Athens County Job and Family Services Director Jack Frech. “And at the same time, we are continuing to cut the programs that were put in place to help poor children and families, programs that provide food, clothing, shelter, job training, daycare, emergency utility assistance, medical care and services for the elderly.”

The budget bill passed by the Ohio House of Representatives calls for reducing funding for Job and Family Services offices in Ohio by \$80 million. This budget cut will result in a direct reduction, and in some cases elimination, of services for Ohio’s poorest and most vulnerable families.

These cuts are on top of continued funding reductions to Job and Family Services agencies in Ohio over the last 10 years. They also come at a time when media reports are detailing record profits for corporations, record bonuses for CEOs and a massive accumulation of wealth by the richest Ohioans. And while the income gap between the rich and the poor has been increasing, state leaders have cut taxes for the wealthy. The budget proposal from the Ohio House of Representatives even calls for eliminating the estate tax, which will further benefit wealthy Ohioans.

“We continue to imagine that the wealth from the richest folks will trickle down to the poorest families. The facts from the last three decades show us that this has not been the case,” Frech said. “We are very disappointed in the decisions being made by the members of the Ohio House of Representatives.”

The Ohio General Assembly needs to take action by raising taxes on the most fortunate Ohioans and restoring funding for the programs designed to help Ohio's poorest families meet their basic needs.

"We are hopeful the Ohio Senate will show more compassion," Frech said.

#####