



HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES

STATE OF MICHIGAN

Appropriations Requests for Legislatively Directed Spending Items

1. The sponsoring representative's first name:
Alabas
2. The sponsoring representative's last name:
Farhat
3. The cosponsoring representatives' names. All cosponsors must be listed. If none, please type 'n/a.' A signed letter from the sponsor approving the co-sponsorship and a signed letter from the member wishing to co-sponsor are required. Attach letters at question #9 below.
Representative Jasper Martus, District 69
4. Name of the entity that the spending item is intended for:
Rx Kids-Michigan State University
5. Physical address of the entity that the spending item is intended for:
426 Auditorium Road, East Lansing, MI 48824
6. If there is not a specific recipient, the intended location of the project or activity:
N/A
7. Name of the representative and the district number where the legislatively directed spending item is located:
This funding would go towards a statewide expansion of the Rx Kids program.
8. Purpose of the legislatively directed spending item. Please include how it provides a public benefit and why it is an appropriate use of taxpayer funding. Please also demonstrate that the item does not violate Article IV, S 30 of the Michigan Constitution.
Rx Kids is a legislatively directed initiative designed to address one of Michigan's most pressing public health and economic challenges: the high cost of raising a child and the associated disparities in maternal and infant outcomes. The program provides unconditional cash transfers to all pregnant women and infants in participating communities, offering \$1,500 during mid-pregnancy and \$500 per month during the child's first year of life. Grounded in global evidence and modeled after successful programs like the expanded federal Child Tax Credit, Rx Kids has already demonstrated

strong public benefit outcomes, including improved maternal mental health, higher birth weights, reduced infant prematurity, and enhanced financial stability among families. The universal, time-limited, and efficient design of Rx Kids maximizes take-up and minimizes administrative burden, ensuring that public funds are used effectively to reach the most critical developmental stage of life.

Funding Rx Kids is an appropriate and justified use of taxpayer dollars. The program not only promotes health and well-being but also strengthens Michigan's workforce and economic outlook by reducing long-term costs associated with poor maternal and infant health outcomes, such as NICU stays, child welfare interventions, and economic instability. In leveraging federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds through the "non-recurring short term benefits" provision, combined with state general funds and philanthropic support, Rx Kids creates a sustainable and scalable model for statewide impact. Importantly, the funding structure includes safeguards to protect public benefits eligibility, avoids the "benefits cliff," and supports immigrant and underserved populations where state funds cannot be used directly.

9. Attach documents here if needed:

Attachments added to the end of this file.

10. The amount of state funding requested for the legislatively directed spending item.

20000000

11. Has the legislatively directed spending item previously received any of the following types of funding? Check all that apply.

["Federal","State","Local","Private"]

12. Please select one of the following groups that describes the entity requesting the legislatively directed spending item:

Non-profit organization

13. For a non-profit organization, has the organization been operating within Michigan for the preceding 36 months?

Yes

14. For a non-profit organization, has the entity had a physical office within Michigan for the preceding 12 months?

Yes

15. For a non-profit organization, does the organization have a board of directors?

Yes

16. For a non-profit organization, list all the active members on the organization's board of directors and any other officers. If this question is not applicable, please type 'n/a.'

Rebecca Bahar-Cook; Mike Balow; Dennis Denno; Renee Knake Jefferson; Sandy Pierce;
Brianna T. Scott; Kelly Tebay; Rema Vassar

17. "I certify that neither the sponsoring representative nor the sponsoring representative's staff or immediate family has a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in the legislatively directed spending item."

Yes, this is correct

18. Anticipated start and end dates for the legislatively directed spending item:

June 2026

19. "I hereby certify that all information provided in this request is true and accurate."

Yes



A Prescription for Health, Hope, and Opportunity

CASH FOR MOMS AND BABIES



“Rx Kids is not just a program, it’s a lifeline and a promise of support. It is about coming together and supporting each other.”

ALANA, Rx KIDS MOM

A PROGRAM OF:

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

FURLEY
CHILDREN'S
HOSPITAL

&



POVERTY SOLUTIONS
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

PEDIATRIC PUBLIC HEALTH INITIATIVE

ADMINISTERED BY:

GiveDirectly

Rx Kids: Prenatal and Infant Support Program



“We know that growing up in poverty is one of the leading causes of poor health, impacting everything from your ability to learn in school, graduate, and get a good-paying job.

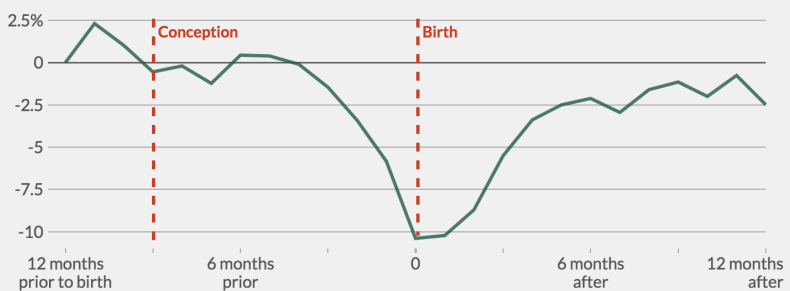
Rx Kids is an investment that will benefit the entire community. We know that happy, healthy babies become happier, healthier adults.”

**GOVERNOR
GRETCHEN WHITMER**

For many families, income plunges and poverty spikes right before a child is born and remains high throughout the first year. The maternal-infant period is also the most critical window of child development and lays the foundation for a lifetime of health and success.

Family income drops sharply near the birth of a child

Percentage change in gross U.S. household income compared to 12 months prior to birth



Source: Stanczyk, Alexandra. (2016). "The dynamics of household economic circumstances around a birth." Washington Center for Equitable Growth working paper series.



Washington Center for Equitable Growth. [Equitablegrowth.org](https://equitablegrowth.org)

In January 2024, Michigan boldly re-imagined how we invest in families with the historic launch of Rx Kids in Flint. As the nation's first-ever citywide prenatal and infant cash prescription program, Rx Kids is already providing life-changing financial security to an entire generation of children.

With almost 100% uptake in Flint, Rx Kids has prescribed over \$6 million to over 1,400 families. Rx Kids is eliminating infant poverty and reimagining the social contract while joyfully changing the lives and trajectories of countless families.

“I know I can get what my baby needs and my bills paid, so I won't be homeless again” - Saysha, Rx Kids Mom



Eliminating Infant Poverty: Michigan as a Model



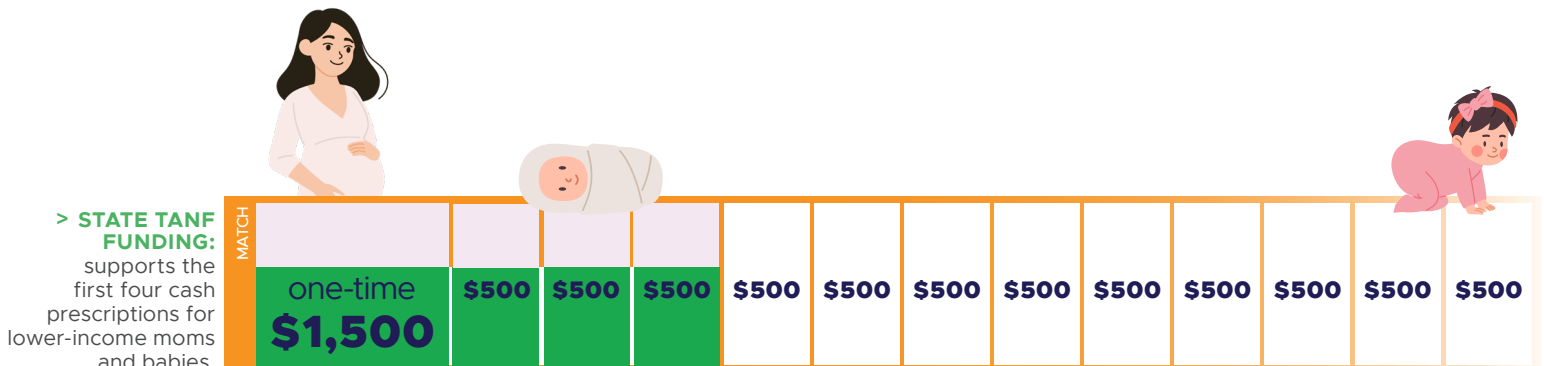
Built on the tremendous success of Rx Kids in Flint, along with global and national evidence, **the expansion of the universal and no-strings-attached Rx Kids program** will improve health, revitalize local economies, and help families get the support they need to thrive.

With leadership from the Pediatric Public Health Initiative at Michigan State University and Poverty Solutions at University of Michigan, and with expert administration by GiveDirectly, the Rx Kids program and evaluation infrastructure is **already built and ready for implementation** in other enthusiastic communities.

Utilizing the TANF non-recurrent short-term (NRST) benefits provision designed to support lower income families during an acute episode of need, TANF funds are blended with other public and/or philanthropic support to create a targeted universal program that is efficient to administer and reaches all pregnant individuals and babies in low-income communities.



**EXPLORE
THE PLAYBOOK
ON TANF AND
PROTECTING
BENEFITS**



“Rx Kids lifted the weight off my shoulders. I am now able to catch up on bills and provide for my children. I was stressed out on how I was going to make it. The thought of going on maternity leave should be a happy thought, but instead I was overwhelmed with lots of stress and anxiety. Thank you Rx Kids... for this blessing.”
- Tatiana, Rx Kids Mom

Rx Kids is Expanding

From Kalamazoo to the Upper Peninsula, stakeholders across Michigan and beyond are excited about the efficiency and effectiveness of Rx Kids.



Research and Impact

MULTI-GENERATIONAL AND COMMUNITY IMPACTS

Cash prescriptions during pregnancy and early childhood are powerful tools proven to positively impact health, hope, and opportunity.

Key Participant Survey Findings

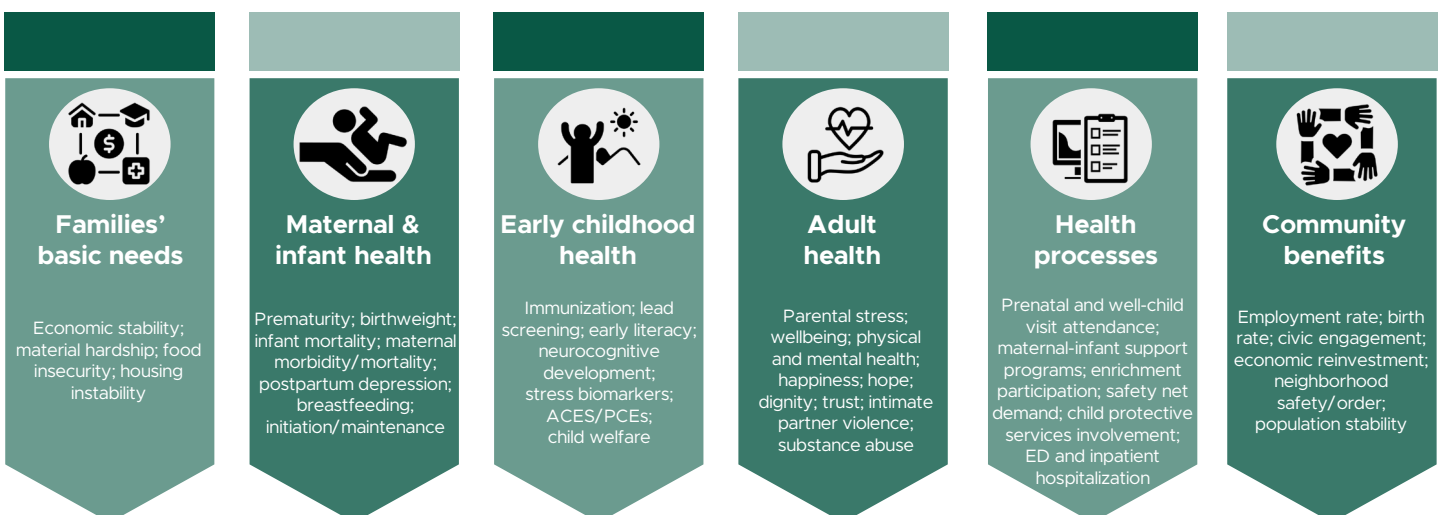
The program is showing incredible impacts on the financial stability and health outcomes of its participants:



- ♥ 70% of respondents make less than \$10k annually
- ♥ 88% of participants say that Rx Kids has helped them make ends meet and feel more secure in their finances.
- ♥ 86% of participants who are currently pregnant went to at least one prenatal care appointment in the past three months and 96% of participants with infants going to at least one pediatric visit in the past three months
- ♥ 84% say that the money from Rx Kids has helped them become more confident as parents
- ♥ 67% feel that Rx Kids has helped to improve their health and that of their infants

Many moms report that they felt the money from Rx Kids has helped them become more confident in themselves as parents. **The top five items cash is spent on include baby supplies, food, rent, utility bills, and transportation.**

IMPROVING MATERNAL-INFANT HEALTH AND ADVANCING HEALTH EQUITY



"Rx Kids has given me reduced stress with the knowledge of some sort of financial cushion that can make sure I at least have a roof over my and my children's head." - Joan, Rx Kids Mom

Sparked in Flint: Changing Lives



"Rx Kids allows me to focus on being a mother. My mental health raising Nasir, who is one month old (and enrolled in Rx Kids), is much improved from what it was raising my other children."

- LaKyisha, Rx Kids Mom

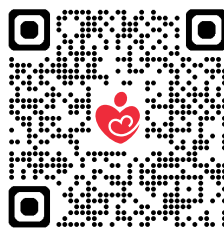
Maternal Research Study

Maternal research findings indicate that Rx Kids has been successful in strengthening family financial security and improving maternal mental health and wellbeing.

Key findings include:

- ♥ Rx Kids families were more likely to have "enough of the kinds of foods we want"
- ♥ Rx Kids families were much more likely to be paid in full on their rent or mortgage
- ♥ No low-income Rx Kids moms were evicted
- ♥ Rx Kids were less likely to exhibit symptoms of post-partum depression
- ♥ Rx Kids moms are more likely to report they feel loved, hopeful, valued, and respected
- ♥ Rx Kids moms were more likely to report having a high trust in health care and government

Additionally, preliminary findings from birth certificate data reveal improved maternal and infant health outcomes including more prenatal care, earlier prenatal care, less smoking, and impacts on birth weight and prematurity. **Overall, Flint moms and babies are faring better in 2024 than in previous years or in nearby geographies.**



**EXPLORE THE Rx KIDS
RESEARCH BRIEF**



THE SCIENCE OF CHILD CASH BENEFITS

Evidence on the adoption of child cash benefits from a broad set of nations finds that they can improve a range of child health outcomes, with the most robust evidence of health benefits occurring when delivered to children younger than five years and during the prenatal period.

LEARN MORE AT *THE LANCET*.

It Takes a Village

A public-private partnership, nearly \$100 million has been committed for Rx Kids.



Rx Kids extends a special thank you to all of our individual donors who have been inspired to contribute to Rx Kids.

“It’s really simple – making sure that people have the resources they need, and we are giving the trust to them to utilize those resources and solve the challenges they face every day.”

**LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
GARLIN GILCHRIST II**



“Rx Kids is a prescription for health, hope, and opportunity. Finally, we have an effective and efficient antidote to treat the pathogen of poverty. The future is bright for our babies.”

**DR. MONA
Rx KIDS DIRECTOR**

**MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY**

**FURLEY
CHILDREN'S
HOSPITAL**

PEDIATRIC PUBLIC HEALTH INITIATIVE

Mona Hanna, MD, MPH

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**RxKids.org
Email: Rx-Kids@msu.edu**

**Join the Rx Kids community
and share the love
on social media.**

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