



HEADQUARTERS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Centers Celebrate Passage of House Bill 2: Historic \$6.2 Billion State Capital Budget to Benefit Cleveland Christian Home Child Wellness Campus

Cleveland, Ohio – July 1, 2024 – The Centers is thrilled to announce the passage of House Bill (HB) 2, the state's biennial state capital budget, in both the Ohio House of Representatives and Senate. This record-setting \$6.2 billion investment includes a significant appropriation of \$1,500,000 for The Centers' Cleveland Christian Home Child Wellness Campus.

This substantial funding underscores The Centers' unwavering commitment to the children and families in our communities, driven by our moral imperative to ensure the safety, well-being, and future of our children. The allocated funds will facilitate the expansion of the emergency childcare center, enabling it to offer comprehensive physical, mental, and behavioral health services for youth involved with the county Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).

The Child Wellness Campus is a direct response to the pressing crisis of DCFS youth sleeping in the Jane Edna Hunter Social Services Building – a county office building – while they await placement with a family. It has been previously reported that approximately 45 children stay at Jane Edna Hunter for extended periods every month. The completion of the wellness campus will eliminate the need for the county to house children at Jane Edna Hunter.

County Executive Chris Ronayne highlighted the county's struggle to provide adequate housing and social services for children in its care, describing the situation as a “crisis of placement.” He emphasized that the new campus aims to reverse this troubling trend. “We need to be working toward holistic wellness for our kids,” said Ronayne.

The Centers is poised to make a significant impact with this investment, enhancing the quality of life and future prospects for the children and families we serve. The Child Wellness Campus will not only provide immediate relief to the current placement crisis but also set a new standard for child welfare services in the region.

We are thankful for the support of the Cuyahoga County House and Senate delegation, especially Ranking Member of the House Finance Committee Bride Rose Sweeney, State Representative Tom Patton, Senate Finance Chairman Matt Dolan, Senate Finance Vice Chairman Jerry Cirino, and Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio. Additionally, we would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for the tireless advocacy that contributed to securing this funding:



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- Cuyahoga County Executive Chris Ronayne
- David Merriman, Director, Cuyahoga County Department of Health and Human Services
- Jacqueline Fletcher, Director, Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services
- Cuyahoga County ADAMHS Board
- Collaborative to End Human Trafficking
- Greater Cleveland Funders Collaborative

About The Centers: The Centers fights for equity by healing, teaching, and inspiring individuals and families to reach their full potential. Our integrated model coordinates health and wellness services, including primary care, behavioral health care, addiction services, HIV treatment, in-house pharmacies, and dental, along with family support programs, including early childhood development, career training, and job placement. The organization is one of the oldest and largest nonprofit organizations in Northeast Ohio, serving more than 20,000 people annually in our community. Visit TheCentersOhio.org to learn more.

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