



# MICHIGAN SENATE

## Appropriations Requests for Legislatively Directed Spending Items

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Date Submitted: 04/03/2026

**1. Sponsoring legislator's full name:**

Senator Erika Geiss

**2. Cosponsoring legislators' names (if applicable):**

Erika Geiss

**3. Intended legislatively directed spending item recipient:**

Friends of the Children-Detroit

**4. Physical address of legislatively directed spending item recipient and the intended location of the project or activity:**

Recipient address: 2470 Collingwood Suite 309 Detroit MI 48206 Locations of project: Detroit and River Rouge School Districts

**5. The recipient's employer identification number:**

82-1577991

**6. Requested amount of the legislatively directed spending item:**

\$500,000.00

**7. What is the purpose and how does the legislatively directed spending item provide a public benefit that is an appropriate use of taxpayer money?**

Friends of the Children is a national nonprofit that has been disrupting intergenerational cycles of poverty, violence and trauma for over 32 years. The Detroit chapter is the only chapter in the state and launched 6 years ago. The mission is to create generational change by empowering youth who are facing the greatest obstacles through relationships with paid professional mentors from kindergarten through grade 12 no matter what. An eligible child must have at least two adverse childhood experiences or ACES. Most of our children have at least four ACES by the time they are 4 years old. A qualifying ACE includes, abuse and neglect, drug use in the home, an incarcerated parent, witnessing domestic violence, etc.). Once a child is deemed eligible from a referring entity (school district, Department of

Health and Human Services, etc.) the child is guaranteed a professional mentor from kindergarten through grade 12. The mentors are all degreed professionals, most coming out of schools of social work, education or psychology. The mentor supports the child 2 hours in the classroom every week and 2 hours outside of the classroom every week. The Friends model is two-generational, meaning the mentor supports not only the child but their family unit, which is often struggling with housing insecurity, food insecurity, employment insecurity etc. The Friends model is evidenced based with irrefutable data that shows Friends participants: 83% of graduates earn a high school diploma or GED; 92% go on to enroll in post-secondary education, serve our country or find employment; 93% avoid the juvenile justice system and 98% avoid early parenting (national stats). The public benefit is the program is transformational for the child and their family (siblings are also eligible) ensuring a supportive professional is ensuring the child reads at grade level, excels in math, and stays in school. The organization provides a public benefit that is an appropriate use of taxpayer dollars because their work is rooted in assisting some of our most vulnerable residents improve their future outcomes. The cost savings to the state overall and overtime by investing in them early ensuring these kids graduate, avoid the juvenile justice and prison system, avoid drug use and teen pregnancy (often ensuring a Medicaid dependency) are significant and indisputable. In the past, this entity received funds over many years. The amounts, by year, are: FY 23-24: \$397,000; FY 24-25: \$500,000; FY 25-26: \$228,000 (Before and after school award).

**8. Has the legislatively directed spending item previously received or been awarded any of the following types of funding in the past 5 years? If so, how much? Check all that apply:**

State

**Amount**

\$1,125,000.00

**9. Estimated time frame for completion of the legislatively directed spending item project:**

Time frame: October 1, 2026 - September 30, 2027

**10. Is the recipient a nonprofit corporation?**

Yes

*Additional Information for Nonprofit Corporations (if applicable)*

*The answer to questions 1 to 3 must be "Yes" for the nonprofit corporation to qualify for a legislatively directed spending item.*

**1. Has the nonprofit corporation continuously operated in this state for the preceding 36 months?**

Yes

**2. Has the nonprofit corporation had a physical office in this state for not less than the preceding 12 consecutive months?**

Yes

**3. Does the organization have a board of directors?**

Yes

**4. List all of the officers and active members on the board of directors:**

Deborah Wahl, Chair Eric Cunningham, Vic Chair Luis Guerra, Treasurer Tomika Moch, Secretary Christine Feuell David Kelly Jocelyn Lincoln Mary Neyland Moore Nora Staebler Frederiek Toney Nikki Hamp Taran McZee William Moir Sarah Wixson

*Certification By Sponsoring Legislator*

*"I certify that my immediate family members, legislative staff members, and I have no direct or indirect pecuniary interest in the requested legislatively directed spending item."*

*"I certify that the intended recipient of this legislatively directed spending item is not a for-profit entity."*

*"I certify that the information in this form is true to the best of my knowledge."*

*Senator Erika Geiss*