



We Need Your Help and Support!




April 2, 2009

Dear 4-H Volunteer, Teen, and Family:


We need your HELP and SUPPORT! OSU Extension faces significant funding cuts at the state and county level. We are proud to be the birthplace of 4-H and home to one of the largest and strongest 4-H programs in Ohio reaching more than 8000 youth through 4-H clubs, camps, school enrichment and afterschool programs. Please don't sit back and take your 4-H program and other OSU Extension, Clark County services for granted!

STAND UP AND LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD. Contact Governor Ted Strickland, State Representatives Ross McGregor and Bob Hackett, State Senator Chris Widener, County Commissioners Roger Tackett, John Detrick and David Hartley and Chancellor Eric D. Fingerhut. Let them know how important OSU Extension and the 4-H program are to you, your family and our community.

Here is how you can show your support:

 **On the County Level - Encourage commissioners to keep the sales tax!**
Attend one of the **County Commissioners Sales Tax Public Hearings on Tuesday, April 7 or April 14, 10:00 AM in the Commission chambers (50 E. Columbia St. 5th Floor)**. Share personal testimonials about the importance of 4-H and Extension and share your support for maintaining the current sales tax to continue funding Extension and other county services. Don't forget to wear your 4-H club shirts, hats, royalty crowns/sashes or OSU logo wear. If the sales tax remains at the current 7% rate, there is a chance the 15% cut we received from County Commissioners in January will be restored.

Write, call or e-mail or fax the Clark County Commissioners: Roger D. Tackett, John Detrick, David Hartley, 50 East Columbia Street, P.O. Box 2639, Springfield, OH 45501, Phone: 937-521-2005, Fax: 937-328-4588, e-mail: commission@clarkcountyohio.gov

 **On the State Level** - Write, call, e-mail or fax your testimonials of support. A sample letter with talking points can be found at debinohio@woh.rr.com or on Facebook, visit Save Ohio 4-H and OSU Extension for more details.

Governor Ted Strickland, Governor's Office, Riffe Center, 30th Floor, 77 South High St., Columbus, OH 43215-6108, Phone: 614-644-4357, Fax: 614-728-9498

Contact On-line at <http://governor.ohio.gov/>

Chancellor Eric D. Fingerhut, Ohio Board of Regents, 30 East Broad Street, 36th Floor, Columbus, OH 43215-3414, Phone: 614-466-0887, Fax: 614-466-5866

Contact On-line at <http://regents.ohio.gov/>

State Representatives:

Ross McGregor, 77 South High Street, 11th Floor, Columbus, OH 43215-6111, Phone: 614-466-2038, Fax: 614-719-3972, email: district72@ohr.state.oh.us

Bob Hackett, 77 South High Street, 11th Floor, Columbus, OH 43215-6111, Phone: 614-466-1470, Fax: 614-719-6984, email: district84@ohr.state.oh.us

State Senator Chris Widener, Senate Building, Room #041, Ground Floor, Columbus, OH 43215, Phone: 614-466-3780, email: SD10@senate.state.oh.us

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, rutharahim@yahoo.com or 937-969-8587.

Respectfully submitted,

RuthAnn Rahim
Clark County 4-H Advisory Committee Chairperson

SAMPLE LETTER:

Dear Representative/Senator:

I know that these are the most challenging financial times our country has faced in more than a generation. But, the State of Ohio is proposing a \$54 billion dollar budget and I am concerned about reductions to one small line item that has a huge impact on our state.

Ohio Cooperative Extension Service (typically called OSU Extension) gives us the 4-H program along with agriculture, horticulture, family consumer science and community development programs. This line item is included in the Board of Regents budget, GRF 235-511 and makes up less than 1/10 of 1 percent of the state's budget. It's a small investment by the State of Ohio, but the impact it makes on Ohio is huge.

I am one of more than 500 4-H volunteers in Clark County working with more than 8000 youth through 4-H clubs, camps, school enrichment classrooms and afterschool programs. These volunteers donate more than 100,000 hours to teach, mentor, coach, guide and encourage positive youth development of our 4-H members, a cost benefit of more than 1.5 million dollars. More than 20,000 4-H volunteers are working with more than 320,000 4-H youth across Ohio.

4-H is not just building life and workforce skills, but is also impacting our local Clark County economy. 1,311 4-H projects sold for a project average of \$672.93 and a gross of \$882,205.03, the 3rd largest Jr. Fair Livestock Auction in the nation. Many local employers site hiring 4-H members over other young people because they know they have developed a strong work ethic through 4-H project and leadership experiences. "4-H is helping us tap our real potential, challenging us to lead, teach our peers, think critically and become active citizens in our communities."

In addition to these 4-H successes, I want to share what the 4-H Program and OSU Extension means to me: *(Insert your story here!)*

The budget cuts in the current fiscal year, combined with the proposed cuts in the two year budget you are currently considering will result in a 24% reduction to OSU Extension's state funding. In addition to these cuts, OSU Extension faces budget reductions for many county offices since the Local Government Fund, tied to state revenues, is suffering during this economic downturn. Please protect the Local Government Fund too.

With the impact that 4-H programs have on our communities, the budget reductions proposed in the current budget bill are unacceptable. Please restore the proposed cuts to OSU Extension!

Thank you,

Name _____

Address _____

City, State and Zip _____

Phone Number _____

Email address _____

(Please note that your name and full address must be provided to document that you are a constituent of the Representative you are contacting. Phone number and email address are optional.)