The county needs to be more invested in social services for our community to grow and thrive. For example, in order for kids to be successful in school, it is not just funding for K-12 that needs to be addressed.  Kids need to be prepared to enter kindergarten. Once they are in school they don't stop learning when the school bell rings.  The Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) has already said they will not backfill the money that is lost to the county when the funding from the Commission on Children and Families is canceled at the end of this June.

In conversations I have had with Chair Dyke and others in the BOCC majority, they have been reluctant to endorse the efforts of the Children’s Opportunity Fund Initiative that will support positive programs for kids during non-school time.  Passing a children's levy for kids 0-17 would support programs that address childhood hunger and child abuse that prevent kids from developing properly and learning in school. It would provide support for programs linked to education after school and during the summer that extend their learning and help them interact positively with other kids and adults.  Currently, we have a number of non-profits that provide services but they suffer from a lack of sustainable funding and are not able to serve all of the children who need them. These are not frills but should be part of the county's essential supports.  Other areas of the country have seen the effectiveness of this approach and models are already established in Seattle, Oakland, Miami/Dade County in Florida, Portland, and other areas.

County voters know that children are the future and this county is neglecting them.  Our recent poll found that 63% would vote for a levy to support kid’s programs. It is important to make sure that children do well in their developmental years so they are career ready and as adults they can contribute to the community rather than be a drain on our police, jails, and other resources.  Commissioners Greg Malinowski and Dick Schouten have endorsed this goal. Commission candidates Allen Amabisca and Elizabeth Furse are also endorsers.

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