



# Fact Sheet

## Helping Ohioans Most In Need

**New Proposals to Continue Ohio's Recovery:** In the coming weeks, Gov. Kasich will unveil detailed policy proposals designed to further strengthen Ohio's economic recovery and extend the benefits of Ohio's growing prosperity to more Ohioans. In his State of the State speech, he highlighted a few of the proposals that will be part of the governor's 2014 Mid-Biennium Review, a supplement to the state's two-year budget which the governor has made a regular practice.

- **Improving Options for Ohioans and Families Coping with Mental Illness and Addiction:** The governor will propose an initiative to increase access to safe places for Ohioans with mental illness and addiction, keep people off drugs and provide those in crisis with a place to seek help before they harm themselves or others. For example, a homeless veteran suffering from the effects of trauma and in need of a stable place to live will be connected to transitional housing that includes access to services to get well, find training and employment, and eventually move into a more permanent setting such as an apartment or house.
- **Expanding Ohio's New "Start Talking!" Drug Abuse Prevention Campaign:** The governor will propose expanding "Start Talking!" by working with legislators to get the program adopted by more schools across Ohio. "Start Talking!" is rooted in research that shows youth are up to 50 percent less likely to use drugs when parents and adults talk with them about substance abuse.
- **Tobacco Cessation:** To focus on further reducing tobacco use in the state, the governor will propose allocating \$8 million from the Master Settlement Agreement to the Ohio Attorney General for tobacco settlement enforcement responsibilities and \$26.9 million to the Ohio Department of Health to support a five-year plan for tobacco prevention, cessation and enforcement programs.

These proposals – and others to be released as part of the Mid-Biennium Review – will build upon three years of progress to better care for Ohio's most vulnerable citizens. Those accomplishments include:

- **Obtained insurance support for families with autistic children.** Gov. Kasich expanded insurance coverage to include autism benefits, helping to relieve some of the emotional and financial pressures felt by Ohio families coping with providing medical and other support for their children with this Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) – the fastest-growing developmental disability in the United States.
- **Established intervention program for violent children.** Gov. Kasich allocated \$5M to establish a mental health intervention program that will be used by mental health and developmental disabilities agencies across the state.
- **Funded research into care for drug-addicted babies.** The Kasich Administration granted \$2 million to children's hospitals for collaborative research projects focused on treatment and the prevention of neonatal abstinence syndrome (commonly referred to as drug-addicted babies).
- **Supported Food Bank efforts to ease hunger.** Gov. Kasich authorized additional state expenditures of more than \$7 million so food banks and backpack programs for school children have the food needed to meet demand.
- **Conducted war on painkiller abuse.** Gov. Kasich has made ending the scourge of prescription drug abuse a priority for his entire cabinet, and, with the help of the legislature, has signed legislation to shut down pill mills, implemented

new processes and guidelines for prescribing opiates and has ramped up drug interdiction efforts with the Ohio State Highway Patrol.

- Established task force to reduce human trafficking. Since 2012, Gov. Kasich has signed an Executive Order to establish a task force that has made numerous recommendations to increase awareness and prevention of human trafficking, and he signed House Bill 262 to raise penalties on human traffickers.
- Launched public awareness campaign to stop human trafficking: A new public awareness campaign was launched in 2014 to ramp-up Ohio's ongoing fight against human trafficking, the illegal trade of people for commercial sex or forced labor exploitation that enslaves approximately 1,000 Ohioans every year.
- Established jobs task force for developmentally disabled. Gov. Kasich established the Employment First Taskforce with the goal of increasing meaningful employment opportunities for working-age Ohioans with developmental disabilities, giving them more employment options outside of sheltered workshops.
- Reformed sentencing laws to give second chance to non-violent offenders. In 2011, Gov. Kasich signed comprehensive and public safety-focused sentencing reforms to keep dangerous and violent offenders behind bars, and rehabilitate non-violent offenders who show a willingness to become productive citizens. The effort also removed impediments to holding jobs for these offenders, to allow them to support themselves.
- Eliminated rehabilitation service backlog. Under Gov. Kasich, a long backlog of people with the most severe disabilities waiting for rehabilitation assistance was eliminated, and now Ohioans needing services can get them much faster.
- Slowed Medicaid growth, saved \$2 billion. Since 2011, Medicaid growth has been reduced to just 3 percent and Medicaid reforms have saved taxpayers \$2 billion.
- Extended Medicaid coverage to 275,000 low-income Ohioans.
- Instituted coordinated Medicaid care delivery. Gov. Kasich insisted upon coordination among the six state agencies involved in Medicaid to implement numerous Medicaid modernization and cost-containment policies, all with the focus on improving health outcomes.
- Instituted pay for performance. Used private care expertise to shift focus of Medicaid from historical fee for service to payment for performance, where caregivers getting good results for patients are paid more.
- Enhanced stay-at-home option for older Medicaid recipients. In Gov. Kasich's first budget, seniors and people with physical disabilities were given more freedom and flexibility regarding care options, enabling them to live at home with illnesses rather than being forced into nursing homes or other institutional settings.
- Coordinated care for recipients of both Medicare and Medicaid. Ohioans eligible for both programs formerly had to navigate these two bureaucracies by themselves. Governor Kasich sought and obtained the first waiver in the country to allow for patient-centered coordination of these programs.

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