



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 28, 2022

Macomb County Prosecutor seeks staff to collect child support, over \$33 million owed

MOUNT CLEMENS, MI - Macomb County Prosecutor Peter J. Lucido's 2023 budget request seeks funds to pursue 6,750 felony non-support cases owing a total of over \$33 million in back child support. Lucido last week asked the Macomb County Board of Commissioners for one investigator and two support staff, all positions funded 2/3 by a state grant, at a reduced cost to the county. In each felony non-support case, \$5,000 or more in child support is owed to Macomb County children.

The Macomb County Prosecutor's Office is working to collect on felony non support cases by making a parent/payor start a payment plan. This method will help the child, and the parent can stay out of jail, and avoid a felony conviction.

"This is a way to show that children come first in Macomb County," said Macomb County Prosecutor Peter J. Lucido.

The daily duties of assistant prosecutors and staff of the Prosecutor's Office Cooperative Reimbursement / Family Support Division include processing cases to establish paternity and new initial child support orders. Daily this unit must work new referrals in a timely manner to meet the state and federal regulation time frames. Lucido says there is not enough staff or time to undertake the new duties of the proposed felony child support cases. The establishment of paternity is the first step in the child custody process, which requires and orders the father / mother to pay.

Michigan's Child Support Program allows for regular child support and medical payments. Child support decreases conflict between parents, increases involvement of the non-custodial parent and increases the opportunity for a child to have a long and fulfilling life.

In the last seven months, the Macomb County Prosecutor's Office collected \$68,000 in child support without the need for prosecution. This was done to prove this proposal will work to help Macomb County children. The 2023 budget request proposes a systematic way to continue this.

If approved by the Macomb County Board of Commissioners, one trained investigator and two staff would do the additional work. Lucido says the amount that will be collected for many Macomb County children will be significantly more than the cost of the three additional staff.

Lucido's requested 2023 budget percentage increase is less than the 2023 requested budget percentage increase of the Macomb County Finance Department, Office of the County Executive, MSU Extension, and IT Department. The Commission is scheduled to vote on the 2023 budget in November.

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