



## NEWS RELEASE

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# MBC-LEO President Encourages Passage of President Biden's Build Back Better Plan

The President of the Michigan Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials (MBC-LEO) today came out in support of President Biden's Build Back Better Plan.

Lois Allen-Richardson, president of MBC-LEO and Mayor of the City of Ypsilanti, spoke about the President's infrastructure package and the nearly \$2 trillion social spending plan today at a White House press call with Michigan mayors. She was joined by other Michigan city leaders – Lansing Mayor Andy Schor and Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan.

“The President's plan would be transformational to Michigan's residents, particularly our most vulnerable and historically underserved communities,” Allen-Richardson said. “Michigan's communities are now at a pivotal crossroad as we move past the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our residents are feeling the weight of high-cost housing, poor broadband connectivity that keeps them disengaged from opportunities, and limited accessibility to affordable childcare.”

Allen-Richardson stated that combined, high-cost housing, poor broadband, and limits to affordable childcare have made a negative impact on the Ypsilanti community, but especially on those of color.

“These barriers have consequences – consequences that are more severe, even detrimental to our residents of color that work hard to advance beyond the inequities that have been stacked against them. And what's the cost? Our communities lose out, Michigan loses out. Those who graduate from our colleges and universities are struggling to find gainful employment in our communities. Many simply can't afford the amenities necessary to call our Michigan communities home will look for them elsewhere.

We can't lose out. So, I'm looking at three things in the Build Back Better plan that I know will be transformational for the residents of Ypsilanti.”

Those three things identified by Allen-Richardson on behalf of MBC-LEO are:

1. Our nation must reduce the burden of housing costs and homeownership. The Build Back Better plan will expand rental assistance for Michigan renters, while also increasing the supply of high-quality housing through the construction and rehabilitation in our communities. Over half a million Michigan residents spend beyond 30 percent of their

income on housing. The plan also includes the greatest investment of down payment assistance in history which will instantly elevate access to homeownership for our residents.

2. Our country must alleviate the barrier to affordable access to childcare, which will help retain young families in communities and support ongoing generations that choose to call their cities home. Childcare costs in Michigan can swell to over \$10,000 annually per child. The lack of affordable options also makes it difficult for parents, and especially mothers, to remain in their jobs, contributing to the 20.6 percent gender gap in workforce participation between mothers and fathers in Michigan. The Build Back Better framework will enable Michigan to provide access to childcare for 602,388 young children (ages 0-5) per year from families earning under 2.5 times the state median income (about \$224,208 for a family of four) and ensure these families pay no more than 7 percent of their income on high-quality childcare.
3. Lastly, investment in broadband. Broadband connectivity is significantly lacking, especially in communities of color. Residents who are disconnected from quality access to broadband infringes on their ability to access professional, educational, and economical support.

“All these issues are vitally important, and the Build Back Better Plan goes a long way to addressing them. It breaks my heart to see families struggle between choosing between viable employment and caring for their families. Infrastructure, overall, is an equity issue that must be rectified before Michigan and our nation is left behind,” Allen-Richardson said. “President Biden's commitment to speed broadband access in every household ensures Michigan and our nation stays at the forefront of competitiveness and opportunity.

“The President and his partners in this endeavor have the full support of MBC-LEO members and the many communities we represent. We are excited about this plan, especially the intention on equity, and look forward to fulfilling this great vision for our communities.”

For additional information, contact Matt Bach at [mbach@mml.org](mailto:mbach@mml.org) and (810) 874-1073.

**About MBC-LEO:** The purpose of the Michigan Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials (MBC-LEO) is to provide a forum for its members to collaborate, network, coach, mentor, share information, and provide support to one another in the State of Michigan. The Caucus works in cooperation with the Michigan Municipal League (MML). Membership of MBC-LEO is comprised of local elected officials and municipal staff members and associates in the State of Michigan. View the organization's website for additional information: <https://www.mbc-leo.org/>.