

**COUNTY OF OTTAWA**

**STATE OF MICHIGAN**

**RESOLUTION**

At a regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the County of Ottawa, Michigan, held at the Fillmore Street Complex in the Township of Olive, Michigan on the 27th day of June, 2023 at 6:30 PM local time.

PRESENT: Commissioners: Roger Belknap, Rebekah Curran, Gretchen Cosby, Jacob Bonnema, Sylvia Rhodea, Douglas Zylstra, Kyle Terpstra, Allison Miedema, Lucy Ebel, Roger Bergman, Joe Moss.

ABSENT: Commissioners: None.

It was moved by Commissioner Sylvia Rhodea and supported by Commissioner Allison Miedema that the following Resolution be adopted:

WHEREAS, the future of Ottawa County relies on the health and wellbeing of its children and young people; and

WHEREAS, children are our greatest treasure, and our most vulnerable population. We must always weigh the risk of harm to children in public policy decisions; and

WHEREAS, as Thomas Sowell expressed, "There are no perfect solutions, there are only trade-offs," and

WHEREAS, we value integrity and excellence and will not trade the innocence of children for other governmental goals; and

WHEREAS, protecting the innocence of children is an issue of concern for all adults; and

WHEREAS, adults and children are increasingly over-sexualized in our nation, state, and county; and

WHEREAS, Ottawa County has experienced an increase in criminal sexual assault cases, with the Ottawa County Sheriff's Department investigating or reviewing 1050 criminal sexual conduct and child abuse cases in 2022, with 260 child victims referred to the Children's Advocacy Center; and

WHEREAS, the exposure to and normalization of sexualized behaviors reduces children's inhibitions and ability to protect themselves from the sexual advances of others; and

WHEREAS, children learn from observing and subsequently acting out the behaviors they have observed. Children who have observed sexualized behaviors or who have been the victim of sexual assault may act out with other children at home or school, which may lead to additional child victims; and

WHEREAS, the normalization of sexualized behaviors and content to children is not in the long-term interest of children or society. Wholesome, good, and honorable content and activities should be promoted to children instead.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners is committed to protecting the innocence of children, and to cultivating healthy children, families, communities, and institutions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, no county staff or resources shall be allocated to activities, programs, events, content, or institutions which support, normalize, or encourage the sexualization of children and youth; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board encourages individuals and communities to promote the good and the honorable to children rather than the normalization of sexual behaviors, protecting the health and wellbeing of our children and the future of our county.

YEAS: Commissioners: Roger Belknap, Rebekah Curran, Gretchen Cosby, Jacob Bonnema, Sylvia Rhodea, Kyle Terpstra, Allison Miedema, Lucy Ebel, Joe Moss.

NAYS: Commissioners: Douglas Zylstra and Roger Bergman

ABSTENTIONS: Commissioners: None.

RESOLUTION ADOPTED:



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Joe Moss, Chairperson, Ottawa County  
Board of Commissioners



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Justin Roebuck  
Ottawa County Clerk/Register