



# HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES

## STATE OF MICHIGAN

### Appropriations Requests for Legislatively Directed Spending Items

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1. The sponsoring representative's first name:  
Karen
2. The sponsoring representative's last name:  
Whitsett
3. The cosponsoring representatives' names. All cosponsors must be listed. If none, please type 'n/a.' A signed letter from the sponsor approving the co-sponsorship and a signed letter from the member wishing to co-sponsor are required. Attach letters at question #9 below.  
N/A
4. Name of the entity that the spending item is intended for:  
Renaissance of Hope
5. Physical address of the entity that the spending item is intended for:  
10100 Grand River, Detroit 48204
6. If there is not a specific recipient, the intended location of the project or activity:  
N/A
7. Name of the representative and the district number where the legislatively directed spending item is located:  
Helena Scott, District 8
8. Purpose of the legislatively directed spending item. Please include how it provides a public benefit and why it is an appropriate use of taxpayer funding. Please also demonstrate that the item does not violate Article IV, S 30 of the Michigan Constitution. Renaissance of Hope is a community development corporation serving residents in Detroit with a vision to actively engage in non-profit residential and community real estate and educational programs for low- and moderate-income individuals. Renaissance of Hope's Resource Hub project will reimagine a vacant school building, transforming the 90,000 square foot building into a world-class community hub, providing a commercial kitchen, on-site childcare, human & family services, workforce development training programs, and a youth innovation lab.

The neighborhood surrounding The Resource Hub is located in Detroit's District 7, a part of the 48204-zip code, where 41% of residents live below the federal poverty level. The neighborhood primarily consists of Black residents (96%) and the median income is only \$21,000. The COVID pandemic caused and exacerbated harm in several areas including financial hardship, unemployment, food insecurity, health, and the lack of childcare services.

The Resource Hub proposal, presented here by Renaissance of Hope, will activate a currently vacant building and have a catalytic, long-term impact not only on community residents living near the intersection of Livernois and Grand River, but also Detroiters throughout the region. First, what supports this statement and claim of impact is the internal and external data gathered that demonstrates the vast economic and social harm caused by the pandemic on Black Detroiters, especially those living near the proposed Resource Hub. Second, The Resource Hub project has been planned and designed in collaboration with community residents and stakeholders after Renaissance of Hope completed a community needs assessment, where residents outlined the most important needs for their family and community during the pandemic. Third, The Resource Hub project is a part of a larger neighborhood master planning effort, led by Renaissance of Hope, that includes planned improvements to housing, open lots, and additional vacant spaces surrounding The Resource Hub. To grow a tax base and population, residents need to know they're safe, they need to know that there are readily available services and amenities catered to their families, and that they have access to jobs and upward mobility! The Resource Hub will partner with exceptional partners and agencies to ensure that Detroit families can lift themselves out of poverty given the proper opportunities and resources. Finally, the services provided to neighborhood businesses and nonprofits will help neighborhood businesses grow in revenue and knowledge and have more access to capital!

9. Attach documents here if needed:

N/A

10. The amount of state funding requested for the legislatively directed spending item.

2,000,000

11. Has the legislatively directed spending item previously received any of the following types of funding? Check all that apply.

[Local, Private]

12. Please select one of the following groups that describes the entity requesting the legislatively directed spending item:

Non-profit organization

13. For a non-profit organization, has the organization been operating within Michigan for the preceding 36 months?

Yes

14. For a non-profit organization, has the entity had a physical office within Michigan for the preceding 12 months?

Yes

15. For a non-profit organization, does the organization have a board of directors?

Yes

16. For a non-profit organization, list all the active members on the organization's board of directors and any other officers. If this question is not applicable, please type 'n/a.'

- a. Jonathan Merritt
- b. David Merritt
- c. Andrew Merritt
- d. Vanessa Bennett
- e. Amber Hay
- f. Paul Fontaine

17. "I certify that neither the sponsoring representative nor the sponsoring representative's staff or immediate family has a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in the legislatively directed spending item."

Yes, this is correct

18. Anticipated start and end dates for the legislatively directed spending item:

October 2025 – September 2026

19. "I hereby certify that all information provided in this request is true and accurate."

Yes