



May 7, 2019

Dear Kalamazoo County Commissioners,

The Kalamazoo Community Foundation writes to urge that you support the "Raise the Age" resolution being presented to the Kalamazoo Board of Commissioners on May 7, 2019. Our organization is enthusiastic about the bipartisan effort in both the Michigan Senate and Michigan House to pass bills to discontinue the practice of requiring 17-year-olds to be automatically tried as adults for any offense and ultimately raising that minimum age to 18. Michigan is only 1 of 4 states continuing this practice. This legislation is a step in the right direction for criminal justice reform in Michigan and supports the priorities of our organization to advance policies and practices that can ensure youth in our community can live up to their full potential.

Raise the Age will improve outcomes for Kalamazoo youth and put the public safety, health and economic well-being of young people in our communities and state first. As the Michigan Legislature and Governor's office moves forward with the policy process, the Kalamazoo Community Foundation and the Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation team housed at the Community Foundation urge the Kalamazoo County Commission to support this needed reform to lead our state and county in the right direction. Please vote YES to support this resolution and join the many voices in our community and across the state who are supportive of the Governor's office and state legislatures initiative to sign these important bills.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "CPE", is placed above the typed name.

Carrie Pickett-Erway
President/CEO