

# LOUISIANA CITIZENS FOR ACTION NOW

*Advocating for Louisiana Citizens with Developmental Disabilities*

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## Your Voices Are Heard by State Officials

**November 4, 2009**

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- Your Voice Is Heard: No Cuts to NOW
- Your Voice Is Heard: Streamlining Commission Approves DHH Recommendations
- Watch for Next LaCAN Action Alert
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This information alert is to let you know that in carrying out recent LaCAN Action Alerts your voice has been heard by state officials. **Read on.**

If there are any questions about the information in this email contact LaCAN's Coordinator by replying to this email, or calling the toll free number listed below.

### **Your Voice Is Heard: No Cuts to NOW**

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Tuesday morning Department of Health and Hospital (DHH) officials presented their plan to members of the Joint Legislative Committee on how they will address the \$307 Million mid-year deficit in the Medicaid program. LaCAN members present at the meeting were relieved to learn that **the DHH plan does NOT include cuts to the NOW program.** You can **read the letter that DHH sent to the legislators at the link below.**

LaCAN's Action Alert sent September 30th asked members to contact DHH Secretary Alan Levine and Governor Jindal expressing their concern about potential cuts to the NOW program to address the expected deficit. The plan mentioned above does NOT include cuts to the NOW program. **YOUR VOICE WAS HEARD!**

[DHH Letter to Joint Budget Committee](#)

### **Your Voice Is Heard: Streamlining Commission Approves DHH Recommendations**

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LaCAN's Action Alert sent August 19th asked members to contact the Streamlining Commission members about supporting DHH recommendations to consolidate developmental centers and to allocate resources based on assessed needs. The Commission has approved these two recommendations. **YOUR VOICE WAS HEARD!**

Watch for future LaCAN Action Alerts as DHH officials and legislators plan for and implement these and other recommendations in the coming months.

**Watch for Next LaCAN Action Alert**

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The next LaCAN Action Alert will target legislators with a message about the **continuing need to fill the NOW slots that were funded during the 2008 legislative session.** Legislators expressed concerns during this year's legislative session about these slots not being filled. **Most of these slots still remain unfilled while people continue to wait and more people are added to the waiting list every month.**

OCDD officials are only offering 100 of these slots a month to people on the waiting list, and data received from OCDD about the number of people being added to the waiting list each month indicates that the waiting list will increase if only 100 slots are offered a month. **It is important that legislators be reminded about the urgency of filling these slots that they funded over a year ago for people on the waiting list. The waiting becomes more difficult with each passing day for many, if not all, of those on the waiting list.**

**LaCAN Members at the Capitol**

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LaCAN members continue to make their presence known at the monthly meetings of the Joint Budget Committee. Approximately 15 LaCAN members from Region 2 (Baton Rouge area), Region 4 (Lafayette area) and Region 9 (Hammond/Slidell area) were able to take time out of their busy schedules to attend the committee's meeting yesterday to hear the discussion of the Medicaid budget deficit.

I spoke with Mr. Alphonse Jackson (formal state legislator and lobbyist) and he said, "You all are doing exactly the right thing" by staying engaged and keeping our concerns in the minds of the legislators. **YOUR PRESENCE MAKES A DIFFERENCE** when legislators and others see you at the Capitol wearing the LaCAN yellow t-shirt that says, "A Waiting List is NOT a Service".

**Any Questions?**

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**Contact Information**

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