

# LOUISIANA CITIZENS FOR ACTION NOW

*Advocating for Louisiana Citizens with Developmental Disabilities*

## **ACTION ALERT - Contact Senate Members to Support Restoration of Funding for NOW Slots**



### **Act Now to Support the New Opportunities Waiver (NOW)!**

On Monday, May 28<sup>th</sup>, the Senate Finance Committee passed HB1 with amendments that restored significant portions of the cuts made earlier in the legislative process. This funding will continue to support many critical programs, such as, EarlySteps. However, **funding was cut from the NOW waiver that will result in the loss of 168 NOW slots through attrition and the additional slots appropriated by the House.**

**Contact** (call, email, and/or write) your Senator **now through May 30<sup>th</sup>** if you would like to express support for the restoration of funding for NOW slots.

#### **Contact Your Senator**

[Click here](#) to find out who your legislator is.

[Click here](#) for full contact information on Members of the Senate.

To speak directly with a Senator, contact the Senate switchboard at: **225-342-2040. The Senate goes on the floor today (May 29<sup>th</sup>) at 4 p.m.**

#### **Sample Letter**

**Subject line of your email or at the top of your letter:**  
Restore cuts to NOW waiver

**Begin your letter by telling YOUR story. This can be in a few short sentences. You may want to include:**

- Your name/the name of the individual with a disability you are advocating for and his/her relationship to you
- The diagnosis or disability of this individual
- How these cuts would affect your family or people you care about

#### **Include in your letter:**

"The restoration of significant funding to DHH by the Senate Finance Committee was greatly appreciated. **Unfortunately, the deletion of funding for the New Opportunities Waiver Program will result in the loss of 168 NOW slots through attrition and the additional NOW slots appropriated by the House. Please restore the \$1.2 M in SGF needed for these NOW slots.**

There are currently 8,800 people who wait more than seven years to receive a NOW slot. Home and community-based services provided by the NOW keep families together and are less costly than institutionalization."

#### **Confirm Your Action**

Please [reply](#) to this email to let us know you took action

## **Additional Information**

With one week left of the 2012 Legislative Session, the State Budget (HB1) will be debated and voted on by the full Senate and House.

The amendments made by the Senate Finance Committee restored more than \$300 Million to the budget. The restorations to DHH funding levels go a long way toward ensuring the continuation of many critical programs, such as, EarlySteps. However, \$57 Million of cuts made to DHH by the House Appropriations Committee remain in HB1 and \$1.2 Million in state funds (\$4.2 M total funds) for NOW slots (included in a House Floor amendment) was deleted by Senate Finance. This lack of funding will result in a loss of 168 NOW slots through attrition and 20 additional NOW slots.

HB1 and related budget bills are expected to be voted on by the full Senate this Thursday, May 31, 2012.

The next step for HB1 will be a return to the House Floor. If the House does not agree with the amended version received from the Senate, a conference committee will work out the differences that must be agreed upon by both Houses. Governor Jindal has authority to veto particular line items, funding for entire programs or agencies, and language in footnotes or accompanying the budget.

[Click here](#) to see how a bill becomes a law.

## **Any Questions?**

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

## **Contact LaCAN**

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