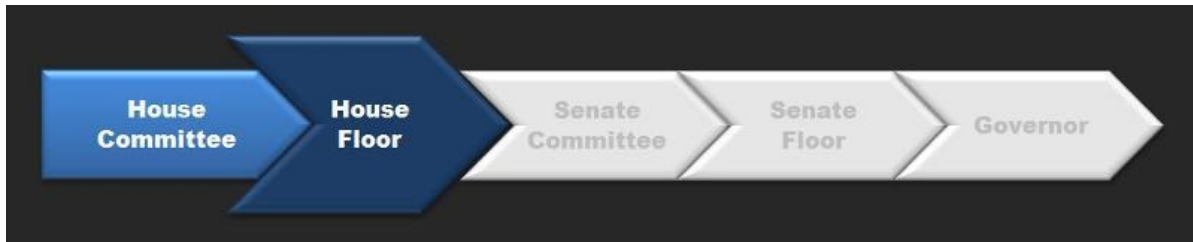


# LOUISIANA CITIZENS FOR ACTION NOW

*Advocating for Louisiana Citizens with Developmental Disabilities*

## **ACTION ALERT Reminder - Contact House Members for NOW Funding**



**REMINDER:** If you have not already taken this action, it is VERY important that you do so **before May 10<sup>th</sup>**.

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

On Tuesday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, the Appropriations Committee passed the budget (HB1) out of committee. **No additional funding for new NOW slots was added to the budget AND the committee CUT \$4 Million (\$1.15M state and \$2.87M federal funds) from the NOW waiver program, resulting in a DECREASE in 168 NOW slots next fiscal year.**

**Contact** (call, email, and/or write) your State Representatives if you want them to:

- Restore the \$4 Million (state and federal funds) cut by the Appropriations Committee that will result in a **DECREASE of 168 NOW SLOTS**.
- Increase funding for additional NOW slots. \$1 Million in state funds would add 200 slots.

### **Contact Members of the House of Representatives**

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

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

To speak directly with a Representative, contact the House switchboard at 225-342-6945.

## Sample Letter

**Subject line of your email or at the top of your letter:**

**Restore cuts to the NOW and increase # of slots!**

**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 long he/she has been on the NOW waiting list**  
*(or how long he/she was on the waiting list, if a current NOW recipient).*
- **How NOW services would benefit this individual and his/her family**  
*(or how he/she is currently benefiting, if already a NOW recipient).*
- **End your letter by telling your representative how he/she can help (See example below).**

Dear Representative,

Please support the restoration of funding for New Opportunities Waiver (NOW) slots and support funding for an increase in 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.

Thank you,

## Confirm Your Action

**Please reply** to this email to let us know you took action

## Background Information

The amendment included in HB1 by the House Appropriations Committee to cut funding of the NOW by \$1.15 Million in state general funds and \$2.87 Million in federal dollars will reduce slots through attrition. As existing slots are vacated, they will not be filled. A total of 168 slots will be frozen throughout the year if funding is not restored.

Several members of the committee expressed support of the NOW program and a desire to restore these cuts and increase funding to create additional NOW slots when the budget is debated on the House floor

The budget is scheduled to reach the House floor on Thursday, May 10<sup>th</sup>.

There are currently over 8,800 people on the NOW waiting list and the average wait time is seven years.

### **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**

Email: [laicanadvocates44@yahoo.com](mailto:laicanadvocates44@yahoo.com)

Phone: 1-800-450-8108

Web: <http://www.laicanadvocates.org>

