



ACTION ALERT #13 - Last Chance to Contact Appropriations to Support DD Services

The Appropriations Committee is expected to vote on the budget (HB1) on Monday, May 9th so time is running out to contact committee members to express your support of the restoration of cuts to DD services. In their committee meeting earlier this week, discussion focused on funding for the public-private partnership hospitals. While LaCAN certainly recognizes the importance of hospitals to people with and without disabilities, it is disappointing that there was no discussion by the committee of the cuts impacting DD services and the need to restore those cuts. **Legislators need to hear from you about the importance of these services.**

Louisiana's budget shortfall for Fiscal Year 2017 (FY17) is now estimated at \$600 Million -- 20 percent lower than previously thought. The Appropriations Committee will decide where to restore this additional \$150 Million before moving it on to the Full House.

The current version of the proposed FY17 State Budget still includes:

- Cuts to the Human Services Districts/Authorities (in addition to the cuts they received this fiscal year) impacting Individual and Family Support, Flexible Family Fund, and other vital services to people with developmental disabilities and those with behavioral health needs.
- A 34% cut to the Families Helping Families Centers (this funding is in the DD Council's budget). \$170,000 is needed to restore the cuts.
- A 20% cut to Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS).
- NO funds to cover the cost of overtime for Direct Support Workers.
- NO funds to fill vacant Children's Choice and Supports Waiver slots.

If you would like to see some of this funding used to restore the cuts mentioned above, now is the time to take action!

Contact the Chairman and Committee members in your region before **Monday, May 9th**, and let them know that funding the DD services listed above should be a top priority when deciding where to restore this \$150 Million.

Contact the Chairman and Committee Members from Your Region

Not sure of your region? Click [here](#) for a map.

All Regions

Cameron Henry

Region 1/10

Cameron Henry

Robert Billiot

Walt Leger III

Gary Carter

Chairman

henryc@legis.state.la.us

(504) 838-5433

New Orleans Area

henryc@legis.state.la.us

(504) 838-5433

billiotr@legis.la.gov

(504) 436-8929

legerw@legis.la.gov

(504) 556-9970

carterg@legis.la.gov

(504) 361-6600

Region 2

John Berthelot
 Franklin Foil
 Rick Edmonds
 Valerie Hodges
 Tony Bacala
 Patricia Smith

Region 3

Beryl Amedee
 Jerome Richard
 Jerome Zeringue

Region 4

Blake Miguez
 Dustin Miller

Region 5

James Armes
 Bob Hensgens
 Mark Abraham

Region 6

Steve Pylant
 Jack McFarland
 James Armes
 Lance Harris

Region 7

Lawrence Bagley
 Jack McFarland

Region 8

Bubba Chaney
 Jack McFarland
 Steve Pylant

Region 9

John Schroder
 Scott Simon
 Valerie Hodges

Baton Rouge Area

berthelotj@legis.la.gov (225) 647-5646
foilf@legis.la.gov (225) 342-6777
edmondsr@legis.la.gov (225) 295-9240
hodgesv@legis.la.gov (225) 791-2199
bacalat@legis.la.gov (225) 677-8020
smithp@legis.la.gov (225) 342-7106

Houma/Thibodaux Area

amedeeb@legis.la.gov (985) 858-2966
richardj@legis.la.gov (985) 447-0999
zeringuej@legis.la.gov (985) 876-8823

Lafayette Area

miguez@legis.la.gov (337) 937-8827
millerd@legis.la.gov (337) 943-2900

Lake Charles Area

armesj@legis.la.gov (337) 238-7004
hensgensb@legis.la.gov (337) 893-5035
abrahamm@legis.la.gov (337) 475-3016

Alexandria Area

pylants@legis.la.gov (318) 435-7313
mcfarlandj@legis.la.gov (318) 259-4275
armesj@legis.la.gov (337) 238-7004
harrisl@legis.la.gov (318) 767-6095

Shreveport Area

bagleyl@legis.la.gov (318) 925-9588
mcfarlandj@legis.la.gov (318) 259-4275

Monroe Area

chaneyb@legis.la.gov (318) 728-5875
mcfarlandj@legis.la.gov (318) 259-4275
pylants@legis.la.gov (318) 435-7313

Hammond/Northshore Area

schrodej@legis.la.gov (985) 893-6262
simons@legis.la.gov (985) 893-6246
hodgesv@legis.la.gov (225) 791-2199

What to Say**Start by sharing your story:**

- Have you (or your family) benefited from programs such as Individual and Family Support, Flexible Family Fund, or LRS?
- Have you (or your family) benefited from services provided by Families Helping Families?
- Are you or your child on the waiting list for the Children's Choice or Supports Waiver?
- Are you (or your family) having difficulty finding direct support workers due to the inability of your provider paying overtime costs?
- What negative impacts would cuts to these programs and services have on you, your family, or someone you know?

Finish by telling your Representatives what they can do to help:

- Please allocate the newly identified \$150 Million to LRS and DHH to restore ALL cuts to healthcare including the Human Service Districts/Authorities, Families Helping Families, and Medicaid to cover overtime costs and fill vacant waiver slots.

**If you need additional assistance on what to say,
 your LaCAN Leader will be glad to help.**

Click [here](#) for LaCAN Leader contact information.

Additional Information

Human Services Districts/Authorities

Cuts will result in individuals and families losing access to Individual and Family Support, Flexible Family Fund, and other vital services. These services help families "get by" as they endure the 11 plus year wait for waiver services. These cuts place more individuals at risk for out-of-home placement.

Families Helping Families (FHF) Regional Resource Centers

A 34% cut in funding to the Centers will drastically reduce their ability to serve people with disabilities and their families and put some Centers in jeopardy of closure.

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services

This program assists individuals with disabilities in obtaining and maintaining employment. A 20% cut may result in the inability to serve new individuals, cuts to existing services, and a reduction in staff.

Overtime for Direct Support Workers

The elimination of funding for overtime costs for Direct Support Workers makes it difficult for many waiver recipients to have enough workers to cover their needed hours of service and continues to place providers in jeopardy of closing their businesses.

Vacant Waiver Slots

The elimination of funding to fill vacant Children's Choice and Supports Waiver slots will increase the wait for services of individuals already at risk of institutionalization.

The Governor plans to call another Special Session to raise additional revenue to address these and other critical needs in state government.



Confirm Your Action

Don't forget to let us know that you took action!

[Reply](#) to this email or notify your [LaCAN Leader](#) to confirm your action.

Why confirm your action? This helps us to know how effective we are in reaching you with this information and engaging members across our state in advocacy for systems change.

Contact Us

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.

Email: info@lacanadvocates.org

Phone: 1-800-450-8108

Web: www.lacanadvocates.org

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COMING OCTOBER 2016

LaCAN & LaTEACH unite into one powerful advocacy network!



LaCAN is an initiative of the [Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council](#).

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