



## **ACTION ALERT- UPDATE: Contact Representatives Now!..**

### **Act NOW to Keep Funding for Home and Community-Based Services**

**CALL OR EMAIL YOUR REPRESENTATIVE** if you want to express support for action taken by the Senate.

The Senate passed the budget this weekend with several changes that will benefit individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. Changes made by the Senate Finance Committee last week included:

- Funding for an additional 125 NOW slots (for a total of 200)
- Restoration of funding for Children's Special Health Services
- Restoration of funding that will impact DHH and may protect Families Helping Families

### **Additional changes made by the full Senate over the weekend included:**

- Restoration of \$950,000 for the Individual and Family Support Program

**Contact your Representative TODAY or TOMORROW** to share how important the funding of these services are to you.

### **Contact Your Representative**

Members are strongly encouraged to **call your Representative today** while the full House is in session. You can speak directly to your Representative (or leave him/her a message) by calling the House switchboard at 225-342-6945.

If you are unable to call, you can find your Representative's email address [here](#).

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

### **Sample Message:**

"Please support the funding currently in the budget for 200 additional NOW slots, Children's Special Health Services, and the Individual and Family Support Program. Also support the funding for DHH contracts which will protect Families Helping Families and other home and community-based services."

### **Background Information**

With only three days remaining in this year's session, the state budget ([HB1](#)) continues to make its way through the legislative process. The Senate Finance Committee approved the budget with amendments for 125 additional New Opportunities Waiver (NOW) slots (for a total of 200) and the restoration of \$794,000 to Children's Special Health Services (CSHS). There was also partial restoration of the House cuts that may result in protection of Families Helping Families and other home and community based services, but the specifics of how this restoration will impact DHH are unavailable at this time.

**UPDATE:** The full Senate met on Saturday and made more changes to the budget in support of home and community-based services including the **restoration of \$950,000 to the Individual and Family Support Program**. Every Region was allocated an additional \$50,000 for the program with the exception of Capital Area (Region 2), Florida Parishes (Region 9), and Acadiana (Region 4) who each received an additional \$200,000.

**The budget is now back on the House floor** awaiting their approval or rejection of the Senate changes. There is indication that the House might not accept the Senate changes. (Click [here](#) for an article citing the response of some House members.) If the House does not agree, HB1 goes to a conference committee made up of several Senate and House members where they must reach a compromise.

Therefore, if you support the funding of 200 additional NOW slots, the restoration of funding to the Individual and Family Support Program, keeping the CSHS clinics open, and restoring funding to the Department of Health and Hospitals for the protection of Families Helping Families and other home and community-based services -- **your Representative needs to hear from you.**

### **Confirm Your Action**

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

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

#### **Why confirm your action?**

This info 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.

#### **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>

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