



Information Alert #6 Advocacy Update - Budget and Senate Bill 58

June 2, 2017

Budget Update - House Bill 1 (HB1)

The Senate Finance Committee passed the State FY18 Budget ([HB1](#)) yesterday. Thanks to your persistent advocacy efforts, HB1 passed out of committee with funding included and/or restored for the following services/programs:

- \$1.6 million in state general funds (SGF) to fill 627 vacant, existing waiver slots for people with developmental disabilities
- "LINCCA" funding which many Human Services Districts/Authorities use to fund the Individual and Family Support and Flexible Family Fund programs, Families Helping Families contracts, and other programs for people with behavioral health needs.
- State Personal Assistance Services (SPAS) program which provides services to individuals with physical disabilities needed to keep them at home and at work and out of nursing homes.
- All but \$34 million SGF of the \$235 million in cuts restored to the LA Department of Health (LDH).

HB1 now heads to the full Senate for consideration and then will return to the House for concurrence. If the House doesn't concur with the Senate version, a conference committee will be appointed to negotiate a compromise.

Senate Bill 58 (SB58) - Human Services Districts/Authorities

[SB58](#) passed out of the House yesterday by a vote of 97-0, and this morning the Senate concurred with amendments from the House. That was the final step in the legislative process, and the bill is now awaiting the Governor's signature.

This piece of legislation requires Human Services Districts/Authorities to allocate a minimum amount equal to 9% of its state funds to the Individual and Family Support and Flexible Family Fund programs for people with developmental disabilities. Since five Districts/Authorities are currently allocating less than this amount, SB58 will have a direct positive impact on people with developmental disabilities in those five areas of the state beginning July 1, 2017 by increasing funding and access to these programs.

In addition, SB58 requires more equal representation of the three service delivery areas of developmental disabilities, behavioral health, and addictive disorders and increased representation of consumers/parents/advocates on the boards of the

Final Thoughts

Please take a moment to celebrate the results of your advocacy efforts. Yesterday was a good day for LaCAN advocates and proves that your advocacy is very effective! While advocates are VERY appreciative the Senate Finance Committee restored the massive cuts to LDH made by the House and retained the funding to fill the vacant waiver slots, the needs of many people with developmental disabilities remain unmet and must not be forgotten. The budget does not include funding for the following:

- To adequately address the waiver waiting list of over 15,000 people
- To restore cuts to the Human Services Districts/Authorities made this year and over the past several years, leaving these agencies far short of the funding necessary to meet all the needs in their regions.
- To restore cuts to EarlySteps
- For an enhanced waiver rate to serve those with complex behavioral and/or medical needs
- For overtime for Direct Support Professionals or to increase rates for waiver providers
- To enable LA Rehabilitation Services to draw down its full federal allotment

We will not forget the 15,000 waiting for services. We will continue to advocate. Advocacy works!

Contact Us

LaCAN is an initiative of the LA Developmental Disabilities Council. If there are any questions about the information in this email, contact the Council by replying to this email, or calling the toll free number listed below:

phone: 1-800-450-8108

email: info@laddc.org

website: www.lacanadvocates.org

facebook: www.facebook.com/lacanadvocates

twitter: www.twitter.com/LaDDCouncil



Louisiana Developmental
Disabilities Council

Click [HERE](#) to view all recent and archived LaCAN Alerts.

Click [HERE](#) to view previous LaTEACH (Education) Alerts.