



Action Alert #17 Put on Your Yellow House Health & Welfare Needs to Hear Your Voice!

May 21, 2017

On Tuesday, May 23rd, the House Health & Welfare Committee will consider [Senate Bill 58](#) (SB58) that calls for changes to the Regional Human Services Districts/Authorities. The current version of SB58 would result in:

- a minimum required percentage of funds dedicated to the Individual and Family Support and Flexible Family Fund programs for people with developmental disabilities to improve access to these services across the state;
- increased representation of consumers/parents/advocates and professionals with experience in developmental disabilities on the boards of the Districts/Authorities.

If this issue is important to you, contact members of the House Health & Welfare Committee BEFORE Tuesday, May 23rd! (See below.) You can also put on your yellow shirt and join other LaCAN members at the committee meeting to demonstrate your support for these changes that would benefit people with developmental disabilities.

Several LaCAN members will represent our group and testify before the committee. If you plan to attend, need a yellow shirt or want to find out about carpooling options, contact your [LaCAN Leader](#).

TAKE ACTION: Contact the Chairman and members from your region before **Tuesday, May 23rd**, to let them know how you feel about this issue.

All Regions

Frank Hoffmann

Region 1

Helena Moreno

Region 2

Chairman Only (see top of list)

Region 3

Jerome Richard

Joseph Stagnij

Region 4

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Background Information

Minimum Requirement

Once the legislature appropriates funding to the Districts/Authorities, these entities decide how much to allocate to the various programs they administer. Two of these programs, the Individual and Family Support and Flexible Family Fund for people with developmental disabilities, are state programs, and should be equally accessible to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families across the state. However, the percentage of funds allocated to these programs by the Districts/Authorities varies greatly, from as little as six percent to as great as nineteen percent. As a result, where one lives in the state determines their level of access to these programs.

This inequity is increased by the fact that the Districts/Authorities are not equitably funded per capita to begin with. Increased funding is needed for the Districts/Authorities that are underfunded, but that is unlikely to occur this year. Requiring that a minimum of the funds the Districts/Authorities do have be spent on these programs will begin to address the disparity that currently exists for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families in their ability to access these programs.

Representation on Boards

With the exception of Jefferson Parish Human Services Authorities, the laws that created the Districts/Authorities did not require equal representation of the three service areas of developmental disabilities, behavioral health, and addictive disorders on the boards. SB 58 will not require equal representation but will take a step in that direction by increasing representation of the three groups, and also increasing representation of consumers of services, parents, and/or advocates.

Confirm Your Action

Don't forget to let us know you took action! Reply to this email or notify your [LaCAN Leader](#) to

confirm your action.

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

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

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