



Action Alert #13

Contact Appropriations Committee and Attend Public Testimony Day for Funding of DD Services

April 6, 2017



The House Appropriations Committee needs to hear from you on the importance of funding waiver slots! The Appropriations Sub-Committee on Health and Human Services met yesterday to discuss the LA Department of Health's (LDH) budget and there was very little mention of the 15,000 people on the waiting list or the urgency of their needs. Filling waiver slots is not even on the top of LDH's priority list if additional revenue is identified- it's sixth!!

The Appropriations Committee will meet on Tuesday, April 18th to hear public testimony on the proposed Fiscal Year 2018 State Budget ([HB1](#)). Several LaCAN members will represent our group by testifying before the committee.

If you believe funding should be added to fill vacant waiver slots, enhance the waiver rate to serve people with complex and challenging needs, provide more equitable funding to the Human Services Districts/Authorities, and restore funding to EarlySteps, **NOW** is the time to take action!!

How To Take Action

Contact the Chairperson of the Appropriations Committee and Members from your region before April 18th.

All Regions

Cameron Henry

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Committee Chairman

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Robert Billiot	billiotr@legis.la.gov	(504) 436-8929

What to Say?

Start by sharing your story:

- Are you or someone you know one of the 15,000 individuals on the waiver waiting list?
- Did you wait years for your waiver services and don't want others to have to wait so long?
- Do you have a waiver but find it difficult to locate a provider with the ability to serve people with complex medical and/or behavioral health needs?
- Have you or a loved one been wait listed for programs like Individual and Family Support (IFS) or received IFS services from your Human Services District/Authority only to have them cut due to funding? Do you understand the importance of IFS services to people on the waiting list and want people across the state to have access to this service?
- Has your child benefited from EarlySteps and you want other children to have access to this program?

Finish by telling committee members how they can help:

- Appropriate \$1.6 million to fill existing, vacant waiver slots for people with developmental disabilities
- Enhance waiver rates to serve people with complex and challenging needs
- Provide more equitable funding to the Human Services Districts/Authorities **AND** mandate a minimum of 10% of their state general funds be spent on Act 378 services for people with developmental disabilities
- Restore \$1 million to EarlySteps

ATTEND YELLOW SHIRT DAY FOR PUBLIC TESTIMONY

When: Tuesday, April 18th **Time to be Announced**

Where: House Committee Room 5
Louisiana State Capitol - Baton Rouge, LA

If you plan to attend, need a yellow shirt or want to find out about carpooling options,

contact your [LaCAN Leader](#). Arrive early to ensure you get a seat!

Background Information

Due to a \$440 million shortfall, the Governor's proposed budget included cuts across many state agencies. The final decision on what DD services will or will not be funded will be made by the legislature. It is therefore very important to show the members of the Appropriations Committee that there are still many unmet needs.

Funding for the following is NOT included in the proposed budget:

- Additional waiver slots for those on the waiting list
- To address the disparity in funding among the Human Services Districts/Authorities
- Enhanced waiver rate for people with complex medical and/or behavioral support needs
- To add Individual and Family Support hours to the Supports Waiver

Cuts of \$184 million in state general funds are being proposed to LDH including:

- \$1 million cut to EarlySteps - this will restrict enrollment by eliminating certain established medical conditions from current eligibility criteria
- \$4.89 million cut (in state general funds) to the Human Services Districts/Authorities - after years of repeated budget cuts, any additional cuts to these agencies will adversely impact services

Advocacy Update

Twenty-three LaCAN members attended the House Appropriations Sub-Committee on Health and Human Services meeting on Wednesday, April 5th, as LDH's budget was discussed. Thanks to all who traveled to the Capitol in their yellow to show support for disability services!

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



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DISABILITY RIGHTS DAY
VISIT LEGISLATORS. RALLY TOGETHER. ADVOCATE FOR CHANGE.
SAVE the DATE
Wednesday, April 26th - LA State Capitol
Find out more @ www.lacanadvocates.org