



# Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council



SELF-DETERMINATION ♦ INDEPENDENCE ♦ PRODUCTIVITY ♦ INTEGRATION ♦ INCLUSION

June 27, 2019

Jay Dardenne  
Commissioner of Administration  
State of Louisiana

Via email

Dear Commissioner Dardenne:

The Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council is very pleased with several of the outcomes from the 2019 Legislative Session that will positively impact the lives of people with developmental disabilities and their families and appreciates Governor Edwards' and your continuing support of this population. However, the Council voted at its May meeting to express a concern regarding the process used to appropriate money out of the New Opportunities Waiver (NOW) Fund.

[Act 665](#) of the 2018 Regular Legislative Session states the "Louisiana Department of Health shall consult with the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council to develop a plan for appropriations out of {the New Opportunities Waiver} fund." It is our understanding the Division of Administration authorized the use of \$17 million from the Fund for the annualization of 650 waiver slots, the IFS night rate, and complex care in FY20. In addition, \$1.9 Million from the Fund was used for the rate restoration for home and community based services for people with developmental disabilities in FY20. The Council did not participate in the development of a plan for the use of appropriations out of the NOW Fund included in HB105.

The Council has also communicated to LDH that \$1 million should remain in the NOW Fund in the event funding made available through attrition of waiver slots is insufficient to meet the needs of people with developmental disabilities entering the system for the first time in the emergent and urgent categories and of those whose needs change, moving them into one of those categories.

The Council would appreciate an assurance from you that no appropriation from the NOW Fund will be made in the future without consulting the Council in accordance to Act 665 and that one million dollars will remain in the Fund. The new tiered waiver system will only remain successful if it maintains the ability to be responsive to people's needs when they have them. A one million dollar balance will provide that "insurance."

Please contact the Council's Executive Director, Sandee Winchell, at 342-6804 if you have any questions. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

April Dunn  
Chairperson

c: Dr. Rebekah Gee  
Mark A. Thomas  
Cindy Rives  
Julie Foster Hagan  
Sandee Winchell