



Action Alert #14 Amended FY23 Budget Heads to Senate Floor

May 17, 2022



Senate to consider amended Fiscal Year 2023 budget ([HB1](#)), set to begin July 1st TODAY! They will meet at 2 PM on the Senate Floor. Click [here](#) for the agenda.

What's Included in the Budget

All funding requests in the Council and LaCAN's advocacy agenda have been included in the FY23 amended budget passed by Senate Finance.

1. [Additional Funding for Families Helping Families Centers](#)
2. [Funding for Comprehensive Dental Coverage for Adults with I/DD](#)
3. [Funding for Cameras in Special Education Classrooms](#)
4. [Funding to Expand Postsecondary Inclusive Education Opportunities](#)

More information about each issue can be found by clicking on the linked fact sheet and by checking out the "Background Information" section at the end of this alert.

Many other great additions to the budget that will impact home- and community-based services include, but are not limited to:

- Annualization of developmental disability waiver increases that occurred last year
- Rate increases for Office of Aging and Adult Services (OAAS) programs including an additional 250 Community Choices Waiver slots
- Increases for EarlySteps and Support Coordination
- Transportation for day services

How to Take Action

Share your personal story and explain how the issues above would affect you, your family or someone you know.

1. **Email or call** your State Senator NOW before they meet on the floor at 2 PM!
 - Click [here](#) for State Senator's full contact information.

- Don't know your State Senator? Click [here](#) and enter your home address. The second person listed will be your State Senator.
- With your comments, please ensure to include your name, address, phone number, email address, bill number (HB1) and a thank you to your Senator for prioritizing the needs of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD)!

If you need more information or would like help contacting your State Senator, reach out to your [LaCAN Leader](#) today!

Get Involved Virtually!

- Watch committee meetings live from the [legislature's website](#). When the meeting is in progress, click the camera icon to access the broadcast.
- Host committee watch parties on social media and/or post a video sharing your personal story
 - Tag your friends, representatives, senators, and policymakers
 - Use hashtags #LaDDC, #Ialege, #LaCAN
- Email, tweet, message, etc. members of the committee before and during the committee meeting and share how the issues above will impact you/your loved ones

Tips & Tools for Advocacy

Looking for tips and tools to help you in your advocacy? Check out the Council's [Advocacy 101](#) page. You can also find tips for:

- [Writing/emailing your legislators](#)
- [Calling your legislators](#)
- [Writing your story](#)

Confirm Your Action

- Email your [LaCAN Leader](#) after you take action or just respond to this email.
- Why confirm your action? This helps the Council know how effective we are reaching you with important information and engaging members across our state in advocacy for systems change.

Background Information

[Additional Funding for Families Helping Families Centers](#)

- Every DD Council state dollar goes to nine FHF Centers that contract with the Council.
- Last year, the legislature appropriated an *additional* \$500,000 in state general fund to the DD Council's budget for the sole purpose of doubling the funding for the nine FHF Centers the Council contracts with. This was the first increase since the early 2000's.
- Originally this additional funding was not included in the budget despite the Council's request. Fortunately, it was amended into the proposed FY23 budget by House Appropriations.

[Funding for Comprehensive Dental Coverage for Adults with I/DD](#)

- [Act 450 of 2021](#) by Representative Butler ensures Medicaid coverage for comprehensive dental care be provided to all adults enrolled in any Medicaid waiver program for persons with I/DD.
- \$5.3 million in state general fund was included in the proposed FY23 budget to ensure these services are provided to those that need it most! Additional funding was also allocated to provide services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities who reside in Intermediate Care Facilities.
- For more information, check out the [Formal Report by the Louisiana Dental Task Force for Adults with I/DD](#) and their [Adults with I/DD Dental Graphic](#).

[Funding for Cameras in Special Education Classrooms](#)

- Governing authorities of public and charter schools are required to adopt policies relative to the installation and operation of cameras in self-contained special education classrooms upon request ([Act 456 of 2021](#)).
- Unfortunately, many school districts have cited a “lack of funding” for their failure to develop and implement any such policy despite the law requiring them to do so. Funding for this need was not appropriated in FY22 but advocates continued to pressure the legislature for this funding.
- In House Appropriations, Chairman Zeringue stated the committee did not include the \$8 million needed to fund the installation of cameras in special education classrooms in its amendments because the committee felt the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) *should* be able to identify the funding needed in its current budget. However, no language was added to the budget to instruct LDOE to identify necessary funds.
- During this same committee meeting, a concept amendment was passed that would appropriate \$8 million to fund cameras in special education classrooms *should* the Louisiana Department of Health return funds to the state treasury as a result of increased federal funds from the Enhanced FMAP. Unfortunately, this is not a guaranteed source of funding.
- Senate Finance heard the continued pleas of advocates and included the \$8 million needed to fund the installation of cameras in special education classrooms in its amendments which replaces the amendment by House Appropriations.

[Funding to Expand Postsecondary Inclusive Education Opportunities](#)

- This funding was also included in the Senate Finance amendments and is contingent on the passage of [SB192](#) which creates a fund for the purpose of funding approved inclusive postsecondary programs for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) at each public postsecondary education institution in the state.
- The Louisiana Alliance of Postsecondary Inclusive Education (LAPIE) was formed in 2019 to increase postsecondary inclusive opportunities for individuals with I/DD in Louisiana. Currently, our state has 64 postsecondary institutions with only six offering an inclusive higher education opportunity for students.
- Unfortunately, many individuals are turned away simply because there are not enough slots available to accept those who qualify. Other postsecondary institutions have expressed interest in starting programs, but start-up funding has been a major concern.
- Our state offers many programs and scholarships for students without disabilities to attend postsecondary schooling, but this funding will help address the postsecondary needs of individuals with I/DD.

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/LaDDCouncil

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