



## Action Alert #14 Disability Services Fund in Jeopardy

April 30, 2024



The Disability Services Fund is in jeopardy. Advocates are encouraged to reach out to their State Representative NOW before this issue is discussed on the House Floor tomorrow, May 1<sup>st</sup>!

In 2019, former Representative Neil Abramson (New Orleans) worked with advocates to pass [HB507](#) (Act 331) which assessed a 7% tax on the gross sales of therapeutic marijuana and dedicated those dollars to the Disability Services Fund (formerly known as the Community and Family Support System Fund). This legislation passed with overwhelming bipartisan support and numerous co-authors.

Over the past few years, millions of dollars have been deposited into this fund with over \$2 million deposited last year alone. Advocates worked hard to secure this recurring revenue source to ensure disability services would be protected in times of budget shortfalls, when improvements to existing services were being made or even when new services were identified.

What makes the Disability Services Fund unique is that the fund can be used to support all disability services, not just waiver services. This includes Personal Care Assistance, Supported Employment, Independent Living and various other state funded services. The fund also supports EarlySteps by dedicating the first 50% of funds available to these necessary early intervention services.

Unfortunately, [SB228](#) by Senator McMath, in its current form, would rededicate the 7% of gross sales of therapeutic marijuana to the Office of State Police. This would leave the disability community with no safety net and take away one of the only recurring revenue sources for all disability services!

The House is set to discuss this issue on the floor tomorrow, May 1<sup>st</sup>. If the Disability Services Fund is something you feel is important to protect, reach out to your Representative today!

### How to Take Action

Share your thoughts about how the Disability Services Fund should or should not be used with your State Representative. Explain why/how disability services are important to you or someone you know and what impacts you feel the proposed changes may have on the fund.

1. **Email or call** your State Representative *before* they meet on the House Floor Wednesday, May 1<sup>st</sup>

- [State Representative](#) full contact information
- Don't know your State Representative? Click [here](#) and enter your home address. The first person listed will be your State Representative.
- With your comments, please include your name, address, phone number, email address and bill number (SB288) and let them know the specific issue you are writing about.

If you need help with this alert, contact your [LaCAN Leader](#) for assistance. You can also watch the budget debate live from the [legislature's website](#).

## Confirm Your Action

- Email your [LaCAN Leader](#) after you take action
- 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.

## 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](#)

## 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](mailto:info@laddc.org)

website: [www.lacanadvocates.org](http://www.lacanadvocates.org)

facebook: [www.facebook.com/LaDDCouncil](http://www.facebook.com/LaDDCouncil)

twitter: [www.twitter.com/LaDDCouncil](http://www.twitter.com/LaDDCouncil)

Sign up to receive LaCAN Alerts [HERE](#).

View all recent LaCAN Alerts [HERE](#).



Louisiana Developmental  
Disabilities Council