

LOUISIANA CITIZENS FOR ACTION NOW

Advocating for Louisiana Citizens with Developmental Disabilities

ACTION ALERT CONTINUES

Budget Amendment Restores Provider Rates

April 30, 2009

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Budget Amendment Restores Provider Rates

The Appropriations Committee met Tuesday and considered amendments (changes) to House Bill 1 (the budget). **Representatives Peterson and Connick** sponsored an amendment to restore cuts to private providers in the NOW program. The committee members passed it without objection. It is \$25 million in state general funds and \$100,062,531 in federal funds.

The Legislative website lists Appropriations Committee meetings next week. It is expected that more amendments will be proposed and voted on during these meetings. **Representative Peterson has said she plans to introduce an amendment for additional NOW slots.** More news to come as the budget process continues.

ACTION ALERT (Continues)

If you have not already done the ACTIONS listed here, please do so today. Note that **#2 is an addition** to the earlier Action Alert.

1. Contact members of the House Health and Welfare Committee (list and contact information provided below) in your region to ask them to **oppose HB 788** by Representative Nowlin. See Sample Letter below that you should personalize.
2. Contact Representative Nowlin to ask him to withdraw HB 788. **Change the first AND last sentence in the Sample Letter below to say, "I urge you to withdraw HB 788"** and personalize the letter.
3. REPLY TO THIS EMAIL to confirm your action.
4. Ask friends and relatives to also do this Action Alert.

HB 788 calls for an individual cap on home and community based services. If it passes, people with high needs will be forced into institutional settings in order to receive services. You can read HB 788 on the legislative website (link

below). On the site's homepage scroll down to "Bill Search" and enter the bill number.

[Legislative website](#)

SAMPLE LETTER

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Dear Representative: I urge you to oppose HB 788 by Rep. Nowlin. As the *(parent of a child/person with a developmental disability receiving NOW waiver services/on the NOW waiver waiting list)* I am particularly offended by this bill. It clearly is an assault on people receiving home and community based services, and will force many out of their homes and communities and into institutional settings.

HB 788 is not necessary. An effective cost control mechanism for the New Opportunities Waiver (NOW) is already being implemented by the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) based on a comprehensive needs assessment and individual planning process. Implementation of the Resource Allocation Model will cap the number of support hours an individual can receive based on their level of need. This is expected to further reduce costs.

**SAMPLE LETTER (continued)**

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DHH officials testified before the Appropriations Committee on 4/15/09 that the current average cost of the NOW is \$65,000, the average plan cost for individuals who received a NOW slot funded in FY08 is \$54,000 and the average plan cost for individuals who received a NOW slot funded in FY09 is \$41,000. Actual services are typically 10% less than plan costs, so expenditures are expected to be reduced even further.

Please do not support this bill in its current form or any amended version.

[HB 788 Talking Points](#)

House Health and Welfare Committee Members

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For a list of the representatives on the House Health and Welfare Committee and their district contact information, go to the link below.

[List of House Health and Welfare Committee Members](#)

**Representatives' Email Addresses**

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You can find email addresses for representatives at the link below.

[Representatives' Email Addresses](#)

Any Questions?

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If there are any questions about the information in this email contact LaCAN's Coordinator by replying to this email, or calling the toll free number listed below.

**Contact Information**

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email: list@lacanadvocates.org

phone: 1-800-450-8108

web: <http://www.lacanadvocates.org>

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