

April 20, 2014

Assembly Budget Subcommittee #1
Attn: Assemblymember Shirley Weber, Chair
State Capitol, Room 6026
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: **Governor's Proposed Budget for FY 2014 - 2015
for the Department of Developmental Services (DDS)**

I am writing you today to strongly advocate for Californians and their families who receive services from the Department of Developmental Services. I ask that you:

1. Support the plan for the future of the developmental centers that was developed by HHS Secretary Diana Dooley's task force, and ask the administration to submit implementation steps in the May Revise.
2. Increase provider rates and regional center operating funds by 5% as a down payment on system sustainability.
 - Increase regional center operations budgets until they reflect actual staff costs and other operating expenses.
 - Restore cuts that have required community-based providers to operate under stagnant rates for many years.
 - Expand regional center rate negotiation authority.
3. Invest in early intervention for babies and toddlers at risk of developmental disabilities. We know that lack of these services, eliminated in 2009, already is increasing state costs as these children develop life-long disabilities.
 - Expand eligibility criteria for Early Start to pre-2009 trailer bill language levels.
4. Invest in employment services for adults with developmental disabilities, one of the best paths to integrating people with development disabilities into the wider society.
 - Expand funding for supported work and job development services for people with developmental disabilities.
5. Allow regional centers to cover co-payments and deductibles for autism and other developmental services now covered by private insurance. Senator Steinberg's hearing found reports that that prohibiting regional centers from covering these costs actually increases state costs later.
 - Allow regional centers to pay co-payments for behavioral services.
 - Allow regional centers to pay deductibles for behavioral services.
6. Repeal other failed policies that save the state nothing and in some cases cost more.
 - Remove trailer bill language calling for fiscal audit requirements on agencies with budgets below \$2 million.
 - Remove trailer bill language requiring a parental fee that is more costly than savings generated.

Now is the time to invest in the regional center system to ensure sufficient capacity to carry out the promise of the Lanterman Act for all Californians with developmental disabilities.

Over 277,970 people with developmental disabilities and their families are depending on you to ensure the budgetary support needed to invest in the health and safety of some of California's most vulnerable citizens, and will be closely monitoring your decision.

Signature

Full Name

Home Address

City – Zip Code
