

State Budget Action Needed NOW

The problem

Mental health and drug and alcohol funding is in serious jeopardy in the state of Ohio. In announcing his budget framework this past Friday, the Governor has proposed cuts to the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services budget by **28%**, all of which will come from dollars that were to go to the community to provide services for Ohioans with substance abuse. The Department of Mental Health will receive an overall cut of 17%; however, this will actually mean a **34%** cut for community-based mental health services because mental health hospitals are not slated to receive a proportionate share of the cuts. These are staggering cuts to behavioral health services and will result in loss of programs and services to Talbert House and Centerpoint Health clients.

What can you do?

We need to make calls to the Governor's Office and Legislative leaders IMMEDIATELY and tell them how important these behavioral health services are to some of Ohio's most vulnerable and disabled citizens. They need us to be their voice. Contact information is listed below for those in key leadership positions to make budget decisions:

SENATE LEADERS AND CONFEREES

The Honorable Bill Harris, President

614-466-8086 SD19@senate.state.oh.us

The Honorable Tom Niehaus, President Pro Tempore

614-466-8082 tom.niehaus@senate.state.oh.us

The Honorable Capri Cafaro, Minority Leader

614-466-7182 senatorcafaro@maild.sen.state.oh.us

The Honorable Shirley Smith, Assistant Minority Leader

614-466-4857 senatorsmith@maild.sen.state.oh.us

The Honorable John Carey, H.B. 1 Conferee

614-466-8156 SD17@senate.state.oh.us

The Honorable Dale Miller, H.B. 1 Conferee

614-466-5123 dmiller@maild.sen.state.oh.us

The Honorable Mark Wagoner, H.B. 1 Conferee

614-466-8060 SD02@senate.state.oh.us

HOUSE LEADERS AND CONFEREES

The Honorable Armond Budish, Speaker of the House

614-466-5441 district08@ohr.state.oh.us

The Honorable Matt Szollosi, Speaker Pro Tempore

614-466-1418 district49@ohr.state.oh.us

The Honorable William Batchelder, Minority Leader

614-466-8140 district69@ohr.state.oh.us

The Honorable Louis Blessing, Assistant Minority Leader

614-466-9091 district29@ohr.state.oh.us

The Honorable Vernon Sykes, H.B. 1 Conferee

614-466-3100 district44@ohr.state.oh.us

The Honorable Ron Amstutz, H.B. 1 Conferee

614-466-1474 district03@ohr.state.oh.us

The Honorable Jay Goyal, H.B. 1 Conferee

614-466-5802 district73@ohr.state.oh.us

The message is simple

Mental health and drug and alcohol services ARE part of the safety net for Ohio's vulnerable citizens. A 28% cut to drug and alcohol services (\$25M a year) and a 34% cut to mental health (\$60M a year) will deeply impact Ohioans and their families. It is estimated that 10,000 to 26,000 Ohioans would be denied drug and alcohol treatment services and that over 60,000 people would lose access to mental health services if these cuts are made. Any cost savings will be lost in the increased use of emergency rooms, hospital beds and jail and prison.

If you will be in Columbus tomorrow, please take note. The Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities will host a 12 noon press conference this Wednesday, June 24 on the Statehouse west steps. The focus will be on the extreme budget cuts to substance abuse and community-based mental health services and the impact on consumers and their families.