

Dear Advocate,

The Coalition for Healthy Communities, a consortium of 27 statewide alcohol and other drug addiction and mental health advocacy organizations including Ohio Citizen Advocates, is jointly communicating the following message. Please read this carefully and forward it on to others.

BUDGET UPDATE:

The Ohio Senate and House of Representatives have each taken action on Am. Sub. H.B. 1, the Fiscal Year 2010 – 2011 Biennial Budget. The bill will now go to a Conference Committee where three legislators from the House and three from the Senate will work to reconcile the differences between the two versions of the bill. It is anticipated that additional cuts will be made to parts of the state's budget. It is absolutely imperative that consumers, family members, providers, board personnel, and other behavioral health advocates communicate directly with House and Senate leaders and their own legislators indicating the urgent need to safeguard the community alcohol, drug addiction and mental health system from further cuts.

Your advocacy is critical to any chance of success in putting a stop to the deterioration of our behavioral health care system here in Ohio. Legislators listen to the members of the Coalition, but what makes all the difference is your voice directly communicated to your elected representative. If we do not act, consumers and their loved ones will pay the price in reduced service availability. Ohio's behavioral health system is on the verge of collapse! Specifically, we need your help in advocating for the changes below.

BUDGET CHANGES NEEDED:

The Coalition for Healthy Communities calls on the General Assembly to take the following action on Am. Sub. H.B. 1:

Alcohol and Drug Addiction:

- 1. Restore the \$3.4 million in funding to the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services (ODADAS) budget for community alcohol and drug addiction services which was cut in the Senate Version of the bill, but not in the House version. If funded at the Senate-passed level, ODADAS is projected to lose \$4,525,167 in federal funding.**

Mental Health:

- 2. Transfer \$31 million in Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) funds in each year of the biennium from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services budget to the Ohio Department of Mental Health budget. DSH funds are federal reimbursement dollars for indigent care provided in ODMH state hospitals. This transfer will eliminate the need for ODMH to have to take funds**

out of community mental health services to pay for the increased cost of care to serve forensic patients in state mental health hospitals. Forensic patients are those who are court involved.

MH & AoD Combined:

- 3. Restore the \$3.8 million that was cut from the Residential State Supplement (RSS) program in the Ohio Department of Aging’s budget. These funds are used to provide supportive housing for individuals with severe mental illness and substance abuse disorders.**
- 4. Restore the 0.5% Medicaid rate increase for behavioral health services included in the House budget. Behavioral healthcare providers have not had a rate increase in 12 years.**

CALL TO ACTION:

Step One Write, call or e-mail the Legislative Leaders listed below and ask them to support the four changes outlined above.

Step Two Write a letter to the editor of your local paper stating why you support the four changes. Send a copy of the letter to your local legislators.

Step Three Contact your local House Representative and Senator and urge them to support the four changes. To find out who your Senator and Representative are and how to contact them, go to:
www.legislature.state.oh.us.

Step Four Urge three people who you know to complete steps 1-4.

SENATE LEADERS AND CONFEREES	Phone Number	E-mail Address
The Honorable Bill Harris, President	614-466-8086	SD19@senate.state.oh.us
The Honorable Tom Niehaus, President Pro Tempore	614-466-8082	SD14@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	SD23@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	Phone Number	E-mail Address
The Honorable Armond Budish,	614-466-5441	district08@ohr.state.oh.us

Speaker of the House		
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. Conferee	614-466-1474	district03@ohr.state.oh.us
The Honorable Jay Goyal	614-466-5802	district73@ohr.state.oh.us

Senate Mailing Address

Ohio Senate
Statehouse
Columbus, Ohio 43215

House Mailing Address

Ohio House of Representatives
77 S. High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215