

July 26, 2004

# THE CLARION BULLETIN

## A POLICY BRIEFING FROM THE OREGON COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

The Clarion Bulletin is a bi-weekly publication of the Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities. The Clarion Bulletin brings you the latest information on state-level policy issues and advocacy resources important to Oregonians with disabilities and their families.

### **BUDGET PRIORITIES AND REDUCTIONS**

The Department of Human Services (DHS) is preparing its budget recommendations for the 2005-2007 biennium. Public meetings are being held to receive input on the recommendations before they are submitted to the Governor's Office.

Adoption of a budget for human services is a long process. It is also an important process. The earlier we can make our voices heard the more likely we will be listened to.

Public meetings will take place as follows:

Medford – 10 a.m. – noon, Tuesday, July 27 – Smullin Health and Education Center, 2825 E. Barnett Rd., adjacent to Rogue Valley Medical Center.

Bend – 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m., Thursday, July 29 – DHS Building, Lewis and Clark Conference Room, 1300 NW Wall St.

Salem – 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m., Friday, July 30 – Cascade Hall, McKenzie Room, Oregon State Fairgrounds.

Portland – 2 p.m. – 4 p.m., Monday, August 2 – Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs, 4134 N. Vancouver.

Newport – 10 a.m. – noon, Tuesday, August 3 – DHS Child-Welfare Building, Conference Rooms A & B, 119 NE 4<sup>th</sup> St.

Department leaders will devote the first half of the two-hour meetings to outlining the proposals. Participants will spend the second hour in small groups offering their input.

For a full list of the budget proposals see <http://www.dhs.state.or.us/aboutdhs/budget->

Input can be emailed before or after the meetings at [Dhs.budget-input@state.or.us](mailto:Dhs.budget-input@state.or.us)

If you need assistance to participate DHS asks that you phone the Director's Office at 503-945-5944 and ask for accommodations.

## **HIGHLIGHTS OF PROPOSED REDUCTIONS**

DHS is required to submit budget cut packages that reflect cuts of 10% and 20%. These cuts are a possibility and should serve to alert us to the importance of early and effective advocacy.

A summary of the recommended 10% cuts for developmental disabilities. (DD) (#S are in millions).

- #65 Reduce all Community Care Rates – (\$12.48)
- #67 Reduce licensed community facility rates – (\$5.89)
- #77 Reduce Other Funds associated with DD Local Match Projects  
- (7.92)

The total amount of lost general fund dollars at a 10% reduction is \$26.29. Since general fund dollars generate matching federal dollars the total amount of funds lost would be about \$53 million.

Other serious reductions that are not DD specific.

- #31 Reduce client Special Pay dollars in Vocational Rehabilitation – (\$1.08)

#43 Eliminate Vision, Dental and therapies for adults on the Oregon Health Plan (OHP) – (\$18.49)

At the level of 20% cuts the budget looks even more terrible.

# 105 Eliminate Staley Re-Settlement Agreement Funding – (\$34.91)

#126 Eliminate Children's Intensive In-Home Services – (\$7)

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR ADVOCATES**

Advocates participating in the budget input process in person or otherwise should ask DHS to create what are called policy packages that are specific to family support and cost of living allowances (COLA) for providers.

Family support has been cut by 50% in the past two years.

If providers are unable to pay staff a competitive wage it will not be possible to continue to expand community service capacity.

## **IDEA STALLED IN CONGRESS**

The reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) appears to be stalled in Congress. The chances that Congress will deliver a reauthorization bill for the President to sign this year seem dimmer with each passing day.

Although both houses have passed their own versions they are very different. With the possibility of compromise in conference committee very remote there is no impetus to begin that process.

Most observers now believe that Congress will adjourn without a reauthorization bill and the whole process begins again when the new Congress meets in January 2005.

For detailed information on what is happening with IDEA, please see:  
<http://www.edweek.org/ew/ewstory.cfm?slug=42IDEA.h23>

## **QUOTE OF THE DAY**

"We did not come to remain whole,  
We came to lose our leaves like trees,  
The trees that are broken  
And start again, drawing up from the great roots."

Robert Bly

THE CLARION BULLETIN is available to everyone interested in issues important to Oregonians with disabilities and their families. For a free subscription, simply send your name, address and email address to [mtbclarion@comcast.net](mailto:mtbclarion@comcast.net).

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