



DHS

Public email budget input

July 15, 2004 – Aug. 1, 2004 – Brief summaries from email input around the state that has come into to the department through budget input email address:

dhs.budget-input@state.or.us

Bend, Oregon

County Mental Health Partnerships -- Expressed ability for state to get more efficiencies by shifting responsibility and resources to the mental health organizations or community mental health program. Belief that these local partners are underutilized. Concerns also that the state/local partnerships are poorly defined and underutilized. Public mental health in the communities could do a lot to help support cases carried by DHS, in the areas of assessment, treatment, and ongoing consultation.

Eugene, Oregon

Children's In-Home Services -- Shared importance of Children's Intensive In-Home Services Program, "a life preserver for keeping families in tact." Urged DHS to remove it from the possible budget reduction options list for 2005-07.

Medford, Oregon

Potential mental health and drug abuse program cutbacks -- Appreciation expressed to DHS for commitment to support victims of domestic violence. Concerns shared about few services now available for mental health and drug and alcohol issues because of cuts in the Oregon Health Plan. Concerned that these cuts will keep people from being self-sufficient. Very concerned that federal government will focus its resources only on the "jobs" aspect rather than the supports needed to get people ready to work.

Portland, Oregon

Alcohol and Drug Abuse Hotline -- Concerned about Alcohol and Drug Helpline -- which serves alcohol and drug abusers and also those contemplating suicide -- and potential for it to be cut through budget reduction options. "I am making my plea to help us continue to save lives. Leave the budget intact at the very least and consider dedicating more money to fund this very special work." Another email expressing concern about the Helpline on the potential list of budget reduction options. Shared that the helpline serves desperate Oregonians statewide and is a critical service. The Helpline was already slated to be cutback, concern additional cuts would cripple the service.

Rainier, Oregon

Children's Issues --Shared main concern in upcoming budget is for children. Expressed support for the following Policy Option Packages: POP #7 (Expands community-based children's mental health); POP #12 (Increases subsidy paid to registered child care workers); POP #16 (Decreases parent co-pay for Employment related Day Care); POP #20 (School-based health centers); POP #24 (Expanding Tobacco Use Reduction Act Funds); POP # 28 (Enhances medical outreach for children); POP #29 (Increasing eligibility for children's health insurance program). On the reduction option list, concern expressed for #74 (Domestic Violence Program) taking a potential 15% cut, which is more than other programs.

Redmond, Oregon

Children's community mental health needs -- Comments representing the staff and board of Cascade Child Treatment Center in Redmond included strong support for POP #7 (Expanding community-based children's mental health and addiction services). Concern expressed about lack of Cost of Living Increases (COLAs) for private providers in the last two bienniums. This is making it difficult to keep and hire new staff.

Salem, Oregon

Needs of Returning Veterans -- Expressed concern that needs of veterans are not being well represented in the human services budget. Feels there will be an increase in the number of disabled veterans returning home from the war in Iraq. Feel that the disabled veterans coming home will have a great need of many services from both the federal and state agencies. Should not just be the concern of Veterans Administration. Asked that legislators, governor not leave out returning veterans and their needs from the budgets, including human services.

Comments and Concerns from undisclosed Oregon locations

- *Supports for Adults with Disabilities* -- Family providing supported living services for adult disabled daughter expressed concerns over the static support rate that is "constricting our ability to pay for her program needs as time passes." Also raised a disabled foster son. Expressed appreciation for what is in place currently in Oregon but concerned that services are "inadequate when considering the overwhelming burden caring for both of them places upon us, their parents." Asked for increased funding to support case management for disabled adults and enhanced rates to provide for appropriate funding for adequate staffing in residential, community & vocational programs.
- *Placing Challenging Teens* -- Concern about difficulty in placing challenging children in homes that will make a difference in their lives. "My heart breaks for these children – difficult teens who steal, act out sexually or aggressively, drinks, runs away, are depressed, angry and reactive, sets fires, etc." We need to shift our priorities in the budget away from spending money on roads and find more resources for these kids.
- *Helping Low Income Native American and other Clients* – Long discussion shared with many ideas for helping low income clients and removal of time waiver for TANF users to enable them to continue to use the system in order to provide enough time for them to find employment, rebuild self-esteem, get better educated, etc. Expressed concern that this should be part of budget request.
- *Integration of Mental and Physical Health Issues* – Ideas shared about integration of mental and physical health with emphasis on model of care. Support expressed for using a model to help guide quality care. This should be part of the budget request.