



FY 2010-2011 State Budget Correction Bill Advocacy Action Alert

Background:

On July 17, 2009, the FY 2010-2011 State Budget was passed. Reductions in funding to the community mental and alcohol and other drug addiction treatment systems are significant.

The Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) Board of Cuyahoga County is losing over \$9.8 million (24.30%) in state funding for community mental health services and over \$1.7 million (10.83%) for community alcohol and other drug addiction treatment and prevention services.

Advocates were told that the Conference Committee placed \$65 million for mental health services above what the Governor proposed in his framework into the final budget. The problem is that no one is able to find the entire \$65 million in the final budget:

- \$14.7 million was put into the local health systems (505) line item.
- Another \$14.7 million was moved from the community and hospitals (408) line item to the hospital operating expenses (609) line item.
- \$36 million that was placed in a Medicaid appropriations line item actually is federal money that needs to be “drawn down.”

It appears all but \$14.7 million of the \$65 million that the administration and legislature say they put back into the ODMH budget above the Governor’s budget framework is “phantom money!”

In addition, the Ohio Department of Mental Health (ODMH) took an additional \$31 million off the top of the 408 line item for hospital costs despite closing two state hospitals.

Governor Ted Strickland and Senate President Bill Harris have stated that lawmakers will be debating a budget correction bill in the near future, including the “phantom money.” Even with the entire \$65 million, the behavioral health system in Ohio is inadequately funded.

Action Needed:

We must continue our advocacy efforts to keep alcohol, drug addiction and mental health treatment on the minds of our legislators so that they have a clear understanding about what will happen to people who are in need of treatment but do not have access due to cuts, and to ward-off any further reductions.

- **Call, write and/or e-mail our legislators and let them know:**
 - The budget correction bill must be debated as soon as possible to lessen the blow of reductions to people who need mental health services.
 - Explain that \$14.7 million was moved from the community and hospitals (408) line item to the hospital operations (609) line item, and that the \$36 million placed in the Medicaid appropriations line is actually federal money that needs to be “drawn down” through Medicaid usage. The \$36 million can never be realized based on Medicaid utilization projections by both the state and county boards.
 - It appears all but \$14.7 million of the \$65 million that the administration and legislature say they put back into the ODMH budget above the Governor’s budget framework is “phantom money!”

- The budget correction bill can ensure that the rest of the “phantom” \$65 million really gets put into the revised budget.
- **Let the legislators know that people will not receive services:**
 - Thousands of non-Medicaid eligible individuals with severe mental illness will not receive the services they need in order to recover.
 - Neither Medicaid eligible nor Non-Medicaid eligible individuals will receive services such as housing, peer support, employment, etc., that they need to recover and live in the community
- **On top of the severe budget cuts to the community:**
 - ODMH took an additional \$31 million off the top of the 408 line item for hospital costs despite closing two state hospitals. This leaves less for community services.
 - ODMH took a 17% cut from the legislature and passed along a 34% cut in funds from ODMH to the community.
- **Ask the legislators to:**
 - Quickly begin the budget correction bill process – do not delay until January – people need behavioral health services.
 - Ensure that the entire \$65 million that was supposed to be in the ODMH budget is in the budget correction bill.
 - Move the \$36 million from the Medicaid appropriations line item to the 505 community services line item so that it can be used for all services.
 - Request that the Governor not allow ODMH to take the additional \$31 million off the top of the 408 line item so that it can be restored for community services.
 - Ensure no additional funding cuts to the behavioral health system.

Legislative Contacts:

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To e-mail the Governor visit:

<http://www.governor.ohio.gov/Assistance/ContacttheGovernor/tabid/150/Default.aspx>

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<http://www.development.ohio.gov/region.htm?id=349&fid=361>

and click on “Click to e-mail”

Cuyahoga County Delegation: Ohio Senate

The Columbus address for all senators is: Senate Building, Columbus, OH 43215

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Cuyahoga County Delegation: Ohio House of Representatives

The Columbus address for all Ohio House members is 77 S. High St., Columbus, OH 43215.

NOTE: To e-mail you may have to visit <http://www.house.state.oh.us/>

Search for each name, go to each legislators Web page and e-mail from there.

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