

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
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SUPPORT RESTORATION OF FUNDING CUTS FOR DISABLED COMMUNITY

There are currently 80,000 residents in Los Angeles County living with developmental disabilities, who along with their families and loved ones, rely on community-based programs to provide vital services and support.

Welfare and Institutions Code 4500 requires the State Department of Developmental Services to develop and administer a coordinated network of independent community based service providers -- assuring that effective services are available to this vulnerable population, rather than mass-institutionalization.

Unfortunately, the past 20 years has seen reductions and state funding cuts, while costs have risen -- significantly eroding developmental services and the quality and access to care provided.

This has negatively impacted local regional centers along with non-profit service providers, who are all struggling to serve more people with fewer resources. Providers in Los Angeles County are facing higher caseloads and service needs, despite our higher cost of living and working.

Now, the Legislative Analyst Office predicts that by the end of the 2015-2016 Fiscal Year, the state will exceed projected revenues by 3.5 billion dollars. Nowhere in the discussions on how to use this unspent money, or in the discussion on how to spend probable increased revenues for the 2016-2017 fiscal year, has funding for the developmentally disabled been seriously contemplated.

Finally, serious reform measures must be addressed to effectively allocate current funding to the developmentally disabled. Too much money is locked in administrative costs in Sacramento. These funds must be decentralized to maximize availability of funding to the contract organizations that actually serve the clients.

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The 1969 Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act proclaimed that “people with developmental disabilities and their families have a right to get the services and supports they need to live like people without disabilities.” If the funding cuts are not restored, vital services will disappear, leaving the welfare of many of our most vulnerable residents at great risk.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors, send a five signature letter to the Governor and the legislative leadership, urging them to address the immediate needs of community based services for the developmentally disabled, and asking for the implementation of a reimbursement system that will assure the sustainability of these vital services in future years.

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