

FY14 Budget Action Alert

Issue:

This year Governor Christie's proposed Fiscal Year 2014 Budget includes \$83 million in new money for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). The proposed funding would result in supports and services for emergencies, individuals on the waiting list and people aging out of their educational entitlements. Also included is funding for the State's Olmstead commitment. The Arc of New Jersey is grateful that Governor Christie recognizes the needs of individuals with I/DD and we support his proposed budget.

However, while the Fiscal Year 2014 Budget addresses the needs of individuals with I/DD, it does not take into consideration the providers who care for our loved ones, co-workers, friends and neighbors with I/DD. The cost of health insurance premiums, gasoline and utilities continue to rise but providers have not seen an increase in the last five years. That is why The Arc of New Jersey is asking for a 3% true cost of care increase for provider contracts.

The Arc of New Jersey's budget message for Fiscal Year 2014:

1. Preserve all of the funding in Governor Christie's proposed budget for individuals with I/DD.
2. Include a 3% increase for community providers to cover the true cost of care.

Action Needed:

Please contact the Senate and Assembly Budget Committee Chairmen and ask them to protect the funding in the Governor's Fiscal Year 2014 Budget for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and to include a 3% increase for provider agencies to cover the true cost of care. **Please be sure to Cc Department of Human Services Commissioner Jennifer Velez** if you choose to contact these legislators via email. All needed contact information is listed below.

Crafting Your Message:

We encourage you to please make these emails/phone calls/letters as personal as possible. You may want to tell legislators:

- ▶How vital direct support staff is to individuals with I/DD.
- ▶That a 3% true cost of care increase will allow these community providers to continue high quality care to individuals with I/DD.
- ▶How much individuals with I/DD rely on direct support staff and how critical these dedicated individuals are to their quality of life.
- ▶This increase will help lower employee turnover rates resulting in continuity of care, a critical aspect of success for individuals with I/DD.
- ▶This 3% increase would go a long way toward building a stronger provider network.

Legislators to contact:

▶Senate Budget Chair: Senator Paul Sarlo
SenSarlo@njleg.org or **(201) 804-8118** or **496 Columbia Blvd., 1st Floor, Wood-Ridge, NJ 07075**

▶Assembly Budget Chair: Assemblyman Vincent Prieto
AsmPrieto@njleg.org or **(201) 770-1303** or **1249 Paterson Plank Rd. Secaucus, NJ 07094**

▶DHS Commissioner Jennifer Velez
Jennifer.Velez@dhs.state.nj.us