

Subject: Re: Good News!

From: colleen horton <colleen.horton@mail.utexas.edu>

Date: Mon, 1 Nov 2004 15:30:21 -0600

To: Dennis Borel <dborel@cotwd.org>

I wouldn't have been able to say that "Governor Perry recognized and supported the need for a line item budget appropriation for this project to ensure that we continue making progress on moving children from institutions to families," if you hadn't included me in the meeting. Once again, your support has proven to be extremely valuable. Thank you so much.

Colleen

At 2:00 PM -0600 11/1/04, Dennis Borel wrote:

congrats, Colleen. well deserved.

Dennis

colleen horton wrote:

Good News!

Update on funding for the family-based alternative project...

As Many of you know, I've talked to the Governor and Nora Cox about funding for the family-based alternatives project. Susan Murphree and I also spent time last week with Brent Whitaker, Senator Zaffirini's finance person talking about the need for more stable funding for fba. The Governor's office has formally stated their support for the project and their belief that it supports the principles/priorities in RP-13. Brent indicated that they would follow it closely and that he would contact Commissioner Hawkins to let him know that this is still a priority for the Senator.

Subsequent to those meetings, I contacted Commissioner Hawkins and received the reply below. Basically, the the project is now in the core HHSC funding and not dependent on approval of funding transfers (budget rider) or passage of an exceptional item. The 5% reduction that is mentioned was applied across all state agency budgets at the direction of the Governor. The only items exempt from the 5% reduction were entitlement programs. All hhs agencies have exceptional items that would restore the 5% reductions, and hopefully these will pass. This puts us in a much better place at the beginning of a session than ever before. It will still need to be watched and followed as we all know that anything can happen, but I am breathing a huge sigh of relief.

With respect to the "expansion" --

The expansion was not intended to be a true expansion, but was funding given to EveryChild to help facilitate the rollout of the 396 HCS waiver slots that were recently released. This funding was from the Promoting Independence budget -- money that they were not going to spend this biennium. That funding amount reverts back to the Promoting Independence budget for FY06-07. Consequently, additional funding for fba from the Promoting Independence budget would not likely be determined until after the session. If we want additional project funding, we would need to continue to advocate for additional expansion funding, as well as look to sources outside of HHSC. This will obviously need additional discussion.

If you are in contact with Nora, Brent, or Commissioner Hawkins, don't forget to let them know that we appreciate their continued support!

Many thanks,

Colleen

Delivered-To: colleen.horton@mail.utexas.edu
X-IronPort-MID: 245480771
X-SBRS: 3.5
X-BrightmailFiltered: true
X-Ironport-AV: i="3.86,111,1096866000";
d="scan'217,208"; a="245480771:sNHT54503732"
From: "Hawkins, Albert" <Albert.Hawkins@hhsc.state.tx.us>
To: 'colleen horton' <colleen.horton@mail.utexas.edu>, "Hawkins, Albert"
<Albert.Hawkins@hhsc.state.tx.us>
Cc: "Bell, Charles" <Charles.Bell@hhsc.state.tx.us>,
ncox@governor.state.tx.us, "Beattie, Terry"
<Terry.Beattie@hhsc.state.tx.us>
Subject: RE: Family-Based Alternatives Project

Date: Fri, 29 Oct 2004 16:23:08 -0500

Below is the explanation from Tracy Henderson (HHSC CFO) regarding the funding request for FBA. Please let me know if you need more information.

The transfer in each year from rider 13c during FY 04-05 put the funding in our base. For FY06-07 the LAR would have about \$0.4 million (\$409,213) each year for Family Based Alternatives. The 5% reduction would apply to base request and be restored in exceptional item #5, of about \$21,537. - tracy

-----Original Message-----

From: colleen horton [<mailto:colleen.horton@mail.utexas.edu>]

Sent: Tuesday, October 26, 2004 1:31 PM

To: Albert.Hawkins@hhsc.state.tx.us

Cc: charles.bell@hhsc.state.tx.us; ncox@governor.state.tx.us;

Terry.Beattie@hhsc.state.tx.us

Subject: Family-Based Alternatives Project

Commissioner Hawkins,

As we move forward in the budget process for the next biennium, I wanted to check with you regarding continued funding for the Family-Based Alternatives Project. I fully understand that in relation to the big hhs picture that this project is relatively small, yet it remains enormously important if we are to continue addressing the problem of children growing up in institutions. As you know, the Family-Based Alternatives Project is addressing systems changes aimed at providing options for institutionalized children to grow up in families. As Addie Horn so appropriately stated recently, "this is a wave that is building and will continue to provide opportunities for children." We greatly appreciate your support for this project over the past two years, along with your efforts to ensure funding via Rider 13-c, but our concern is continuation of the initiative.

I, along with several others, recently met with Governor Perry. One of the issues discussed at that meeting was the continuation of the Family-Based Alternatives Project as the Governor has supported this initiative through Executive Order RP-13. Governor Perry recognized and supported the need for a line item budget appropriation for this project to ensure that we continue making progress on moving children from institutions to families. He understood the difficulty for the project when funding is dependent on an appropriations rider requiring annual requests.

I am writing to ask for your support for future funding and to inquire as to how it might be addressed in the FY2006/07 appropriations bill. The efforts involved in this project (working with birth families, recruiting support families, assessing children, molding provider services, working with agency staff to remove systems barriers, and more) are time intensive activities that realistically cannot start and

stop easily. It is difficult for the project to plan future activities when the core program funding is dependent on annual requests to the LBB. Two-year (biennial) certainty would provide significant security that would increase opportunities for continuity in the program. In the HHSC LAR, Rider 13c was eliminated and a general fund transfer rider was added which makes it even more difficult to determine future plans for the project as it is no longer mentioned by name.

Therefore, I would greatly appreciate your sharing your thoughts, ideas, or intentions around continued funding for this project so that we may steer our advocacy efforts effectively. Many thanks...

Respectfully,

Colleen Horton
Texas Center for Disability Studies

232-0754