



Highlights

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Advocacy essential now

Legislators return home before tackling state's budget

by Mrs. Lee Veenker
Council Chairman

Despite a long list of urgent and competing demands for higher state spending, legislators are already facing a tight budget — a budget that represents a \$4-6 billion deficit between funds available and the amount needed just to maintain current services. And, as Texans with disabilities know, services already are in short supply.

It's the same old problem — money, *money*, **money!** Who needs it most? How much do they get?

Where do the funds come from?

The Legislature has decided to wait until a performance review of state services and programs is in hand on July 1 to draft the state's budget for the next two years. Then they can use it to streamline state operations — by figuring out which services meet the needs of Texas, how these services can be furnished at the lowest cost, and how to bring more federal dollars into the state.

Since the regular session ends on May 27, legislators will be back in their districts during June. This month presents an excellent opportu-

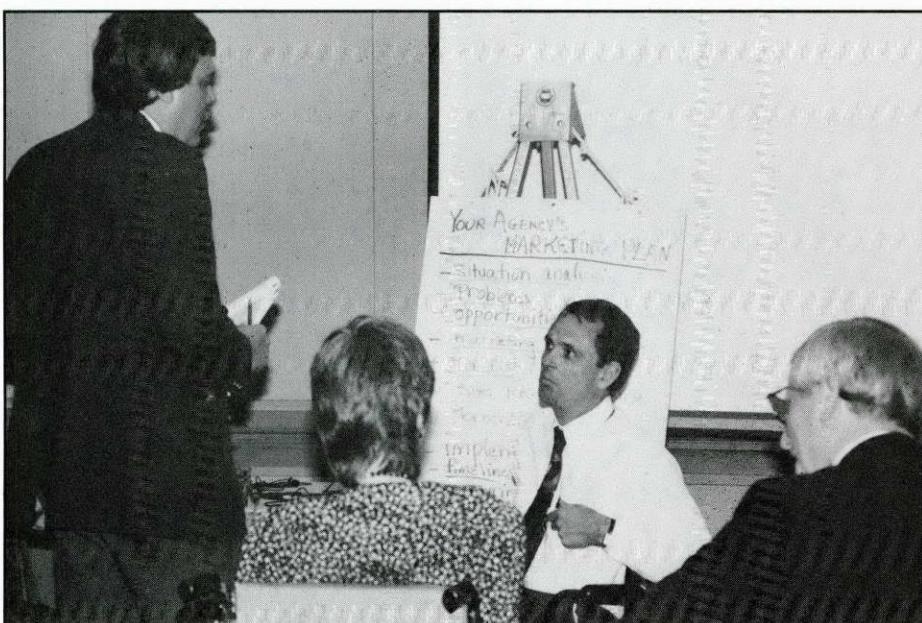
nity for you to contact your legislators, relay your experiences and tell them what services are needed.

Without your input — visits to legislators, letters and phone calls — essential programs and services may fall to the wayside as the state focuses on balancing its budget. Do not assume that worthy concepts and programs will continue or be approved just because they are worthwhile.

For example, in March the House Committee on Appropriations

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Making connections: the business of integrated employment



*"I have not met a person who wanted to work who couldn't work."
- Rick Douglas*

From marketing to assistive technology to organizational change, "Making Connections: The Business of Community Integrated Employment" examined the ins and outs of making supported employment a success. Sponsored by Texas WorkNet, April 1-3, in San Antonio, the conference also addressed workplace supports, funding, transition from school to work and other topics.

"Supported employment creates virtually no ineligible clients," explained Rick Douglas, executive director of the President's Committee

See "Integrated employment" page 5

With some businesses you can turn accommodations for employees with disabilities into benefits for customers too, explains Rick Douglas (in white shirt). As keynote speaker at the supported employment conference, he addressed building a vision for the future and effective marketing.

State budget

Continued from page 1

proposed a two-year budget that would stay within the state's projected revenue. Under that plan, House Bill (H.B.) 10, state government funding and services would be reduced about 12 percent from current levels.

Current budget cuts, one percent for the remainder of the fiscal year, pale before H.B. 10 and cuts that may have to be made to keep the budget within available revenues. H.B. 10 hits human services hard. At a press conference April 5, the Disability Policy Consortium—which the Council is a member of—outlined H.B. 10's effects. These include cuts in independent living, supported employment, and in-home and family support services, as well as many others.

For example, Early Childhood Intervention funds would fall below federal match requirements, resulting in a 25 percent program budget cut. Community care services under the Texas Department of Human Services could be cut for 11,500 people with disabilities. About 5,500 families would not be able to access in-home and community support services through the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation. Also, Texas Rehabilitation Commission's vocational rehabilitation program would be cut and two independent living centers could be closed.

Your input is essential to prevent such drastic cuts in human services. By speaking out you can improve services and ensure the empowerment of people with disabilities to live independently and make personal choices. Your comments are important. Each individual can make a difference. Please contact your legislators. ❖



Call 1-800-BEAT WASTE!!!

*Share your ideas to
BEAT WASTE
in state government*

To suggest ways to streamline, coordinate and improve services, call 1-800-BEAT WAS(TE). That's 1-800-232-8927. In Austin, call 475-0332.

Auditors scrutinize state agencies' effectiveness and organization

Less than a month after convening, the Legislature passed and Governor Ann Richards signed into law Senate Bill 111 which requires a performance review of all state agencies and programs. By July 1, the auditors will examine each state agencies' effectiveness as well as ways to restructure them, including consolidation and reorganization.

"We're looking at every way possible to rebuild state government as if we had to start all over — because we do," said John Sharp, State Comptroller.

The audit's goal, Sharp explains, is to improve services without increasing costs by eliminating waste and duplication, while upgrading technology and efficiency. The audit also will look at ways to bring more federal dollars into the state.

As required by Senate Bill 111, the State Comptroller's Office is conducting the audit, with assistance by the Legislative Budget Office, the State Auditor, the Sunset Advisory Commission and other

agencies. About 80 state employees are working on this task.

The audit team is divided up by functional areas:

- Health and Human Services
- Education
- Transportation
- Public Safety and Criminal Justice
- General Government and Regulatory Agencies
- Natural Resources
- Employee Benefits
- Fiscal Issues (issues that cut across multiple functional areas, such as debt policy, purchasing, and legal issues).

In addition to examining the agencies, auditors are seeking public input through a toll-free hotline, 1-800-BEAT WAS(TE), and hearings around the state. These present an excellent opportunity for people with disabilities, family members and other advocates to provide ideas on how to improve the

See "Agencies audited" page 3

Reports available from Council

Capitol accessibility, technology, I&R and child care issues studied

Several reports have been produced by DD grants* recently and are available by writing to Erma Henderson, Texas Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities, 4900 N. Lamar Blvd. Austin, Texas 78751-2316 or by calling her at (512) 483-4080.

Capitol Accessibility Guide:

While it is difficult for anyone to get around the State Capitol building, it's even more formidable for individuals with disabilities. The "Accessibility Guide to the Texas State Capitol" is designed for individuals with disabilities to use

when visiting the Capitol or nearby state office buildings. It addresses both accessibility and inaccessibility. Topics range from parking spaces and how to get around the Capitol to meeting rooms and rest rooms. The guide is available in standard print, large print and Braille.

"Integrating Technology Into Service Delivery (ITSD) Project:

Final Report," examines this project's efforts to link technology, individuals and agencies in the Dallas/Fort Worth area.

Under the DD grant, The University of Texas at Arlington created: a computer system for screening, assessing and evaluating

an individual's potential for technological assistance; a computer-based "bulletin board" providing information and connecting service providers, consumers and researchers; and training and technical assistance to enhance agency understanding and use of technology in service delivery.

See "Reports available" page 3

**Note: DD grant funds are awarded by the Texas Rehabilitation Commission on behalf of the Texas Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities. TRC is the designated agency to provide administrative support to the Texas Planning Council.*

Agencies audited

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Texas health and human services delivery system.

The auditors especially want examples of waste in the government, duplication of services and ways to improve the service delivery system.

The audit began in mid-February and is divided into four phases, each lasting about one month. In the start-up phase, review teams were created and began analyzing state agencies and collecting data. During phase two, which ended in early May, reviewers began to refine issues, analyze information compiled and develop issue papers.

In phase three, which ends about June 7, audit teams continue their research, refine staff reports, and develop findings and recommendations. During the last phase, auditors will complete their findings and recommendations and submit their final report to the Legislature by July 1. ❖



Partners honored for leadership skills — Rep. Elliott Naishtat (D-Austin) congratulates Walter Hart, Fort Worth, on completing the Partners in Policymaking program. Naishtat presented the 30 graduates with a resolution he sponsored in the Texas House of Representatives which recognizes the partners dedication to improving their advocacy skills and to working with legislators and other policymakers to influence public policy. Roger Webb, Council executive director, presented a certificate to the graduates and Terri Kenworthy, public policy assistant, introduced them at a reception April 20. ❖

Reports available from Council *Continued from page 3*

Information and Referral:

The Texas Information and Referral (I&R) Task Force has developed two reports: "Information and Referral in Texas: Needs, Resources, and Opportunities" and "Information and Referral in Texas: A Plan to Improve Services."

The first report outlines the needs for information and referral, current systems in Texas, programs in other states and key issues involved. The latter makes five recommendations to build a network using current systems as a foundation and to improve access to information about available services.

This project is looking at ways now to implement the plan to improve services. The project is a collaborative effort of the Texas Health and Human Services Coordinating Council, Texas Interagency Council for Early Childhood

Intervention and the Texas Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities, supported with a DD grant.

Integrated Child Care: In an 18-month planning study funded with a DD grant, Project Any Baby Can explored child care options — or the lack of options — for children with disabilities in Texas. The project recently completed its final report: "Planning Study on Integrated Child Care Options in Texas: A report and recommendations for action."

The report identifies four major barriers to the acceptance of children with disabilities by child care programs, the characteristics of child care programs that serve people with disabilities, and incentives which would encourage others to provide integrated care.

The Council recently approved a

request for proposals to create a statewide training and technical assistance program which would begin to address the critical need for child care options for children with disabilities in Texas. That project is expected to begin this fall. ♦

Council welcomes two new members

The Council welcomes two new members: Federico Marquez from El Paso and Forrest Novy, Ph.D.

Marquez replaces Lauro Guerra, whose term expired. Dr. Novy replaces Ann Smisko as the alternate representative for the Texas Education Agency. Novy is an education specialist in Special Education Programs. ♦

80 families to be served in Houston area

Hermann Children's Hospital develops respite program

Currently serving about 20 families, Hermann Children's Hospital is providing hospital-based respite care to families of children with developmental disabilities who require skilled nursing care. The children's hospital started its respite services in December and plans to serve for more than 80 families in the Houston area under a three-year DD grant.

"Respite services provide a much needed break to families that care for children who require extensive care every day and long-term medical treatment," said Karen Brumley, project director. "This lessens the stress that surrounds these families and helps them remain strong as a family unit.

"We've received a lot of support



from the community," she added. "A lot of merchants have donated items."

"I can't say enough positive things about them," said Liz Newhouse of the Texas Respite Resource Network which assisted Santa Rosa Children's Hospital in

San Antonio to develop the first hospital-based respite program in Texas. "They have had a steady increase in the number of families enrolling and are already expanding to provide overnight care...I think that's what the community wants and needs."

Hermann Respite House currently provides respite care two days a week and two Saturdays a month. Starting May 31, they also will provide overnight care on weekends.

The DD Program also provides grant funds for respite projects in Dallas and Fort Worth, as well as Santa Rosa Children's Hospital in San Antonio. ♦

Community integrated employment *Continued from page 1*

on Employment of People with Disabilities.

With the right kinds of supports, on the job and off the job, people with disabilities can do regular kinds of work, he told some 600 conference participants. "We need to turn dependence into independence." About 29 million people, two-thirds of all Americans with disabilities, are not working.

There are three essential ingredients to supported employment: The work must be paid; it must be in an integrated setting; and the employee must need on-going supports at the worksite to maintain employment.

"Real work and real pay are what people get — minimum wage at least," Douglas explained. "In Vermont, employers have become the biggest advocates for people with disabilities working in the community," he said, because employers there have realized it works.

Natural supports from the employer make the best sense, Douglas said, with support from the job coach and system fading over time. However, long-term supports should include job upgrades and replacements.

Leo Gutierrez, San Antonio, explained that six months ago he got a job rolling silverware up in napkins at Red Lobster. But he wanted to do more. Now he also works in the kitchen preparing shrimp.

"I moved out into my own apartment yesterday," he announced. His job coach helped him find the apartment and move out of a boarding home.

"Supported employment is an investment in people, and we have to take a long hard look at how we value people," pointed out Lisa Grier, Expanco, Inc., Fort Worth.

"I think we are serving the needs of the employer as well as serving the needs of people with disabilities,"

she said. Under a DD grant, Expanco is placing individuals who work in its sheltered workshop into competitive employment.

"I'm making \$390 a month and I'm proud of myself," revealed Joanne Murkeldove, Fort Worth. She worked in the sheltered workshop for a year before obtaining supported employment with Tandy

"Working in the community lets us make the money that we can make and want to make, and it makes us self-reliant." Joanne Murkeldove

Corporation. "I rely on myself now. It's harder, but I can get over it."

An important step in making good job matches and helping the supported employee become accepted by co-workers is analyzing a business's work culture, explained Dale Dileo, Training Resource Network, New Hampshire, and Ernesto Sanchez, Dallas County MHMR Center.

This involves determining what is important to the employees — what their shared values and attitudes are — and then helping the new employee blend into the group, Dileo said. Strategies for building acceptance and natural supports include:

- using co-workers for orientation and training (not sheltering)
- interdependent job designs (jobs the individual can't do alone)
- using regular lines of supervision (job coach helps employer work with the employee)
- finding people who can provide introductions
- building familiarity (sharing cookies, vacation photos, etc.)
- finding people with common interests
- joining in social events.

It's also critical to recognize who is in charge, both officially and unofficially, and to be careful about suggesting any space changes. "Don't mess with a person's turf,"

Dileo said. Any infringement on an individual's workspace, even moving files, can hinder acceptance.

Before approaching a business about supported employment, you have to thoroughly plan your sales call, Rick Douglas stressed. First, develop an opener which introduces supported employment and implies that it will benefit the employer.

Then go over each feature of supported employment and explain its benefit (for example, on-going support results in lower turnover of employees).

You also have to be ready for objections. "Raise the favorite objection you hear before you hear it," Douglas said. "You've got to recognize the objection, neutralize it, and then diffuse it."

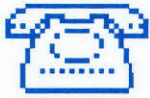
He also recommends having a list of other employers who have hired people with disabilities, along with their addresses and phone numbers.

Another good marketing tool is a photo album with pictures of individuals at work and a brief description of their jobs. This can be left with the employer, providing an excuse to return and talk again.

Finally, be sure to ask for what you want before you leave, such as an interview or job analysis.

"Everybody has underestimated people with disabilities, so we underestimate ourselves," observed Kathy Buckley from Northridge, California. "We need to develop self-esteem and a sense of self."

"Working in the community lets us make the money that we can make and want to make, and it makes us self-reliant," said Joanne Murkeldove. This means "being like everybody else," she explained, "like everybody else in the work force." ❖



Relay Texas reaches across sound barrier

Operating around the clock, Relay Texas allows people in this state who are deaf, hearing impaired or speech impaired to communicate with other people via telephone.

There are no charges for local calls. For in-state, long distance relay calls, the rates are half of the usual charge. This discount does not apply to interstate calls.

People who use a Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TDD) or compatible equipment can dial 1-800-735-2989 (that's 1-800-RELAY TX) to contact people who do not have speech or hearing disabilities.

People without speech or hearing disabilities can dial 1-800-735-2988 (1-800-RELAY VV) to contact people who use TDDs or similar devices. ❖

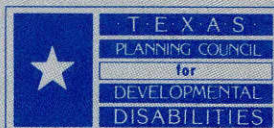
18 organizations use stipends to increase consumer involvement, empowerment

In the last year and a half, the DD Program has awarded stipends to 18 organizations to promote the empowerment and involvement of people with developmental disabilities. These stipends enable consumers, families and direct care providers who do not have organizational support to attend meetings, conferences, workshops and other events.

Funds are awarded to organizations sponsoring events within Texas that enhance independence, productivity and community integration for people with developmen-

tal disabilities. Sponsoring organizations must apply for funding at least four months before an event. If multiple organizations are sponsoring the program, only one need apply.

For more details on the stipends and an application kit, write to David P. Henderson, Texas Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities, 4900 North Lamar Blvd., Austin, Texas 78751-2316 or call (512) 483-4084. ❖



Highlights

Highlights is produced by the Texas Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities for distribution to Council members, grantees and other interested persons throughout the state. Organizations that serve persons who have developmental disabilities are encouraged to submit news for publication. Inquiries may be addressed to Lucy Walker, editor, Texas Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities, 4900 North Lamar Blvd., Austin, Texas 78751-2316, (512) 483-4092 voice or TDD (512) 483-4099. Taped copies are available upon request.

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