



Department of County Human Services

MULTNOMAH COUNTY OREGON

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**Citizen
Budget
Advisory
Committee**

Members:

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March 15, 2007

Dear Chair Wheeler,

Our CBAC has once again been given the daunting task of reviewing the Program Offers for the Department of County Human Services. All told, there are approximately 110 offers to review. We are aware that the County is cutting \$10 million in its FY08 budget. We note, with some relief, that the amount to be cut is lower than in recent years.

In regard to our recommendations at this point, we are (with one exception) only going to highlight several important new Program Offers for funding. In our subsequent recommendations to the full Board on March 21st, we may choose to recommend specific ongoing and one-time-only funded offers for approval, as well as recommending that some of those programs not be funded.

In the all-important area of Mental Health and Addiction Services, we call your attention to Program #25065 – Secure Mental Health Sub-Acute Facility for Adults. This program requests one-time-only funding for build-out and start-up expenses, as well as ongoing funding, for a long-needed 16 bed sub-acute facility to provide brief, intensive residential treatment as an alternative to hospitalization or incarceration. This is a preventive program that would save lives and money in the County. We would also recommend adoption of Program #25056B – Mobile Crisis Outreach Enhanced-Project. This offer would add a team to the Project Respond program that focuses on the needs of law enforcement and coordinates alternatives to incarceration for the mentally ill. This is a program that may help prevent another needless death such as that of James Chasse, Jr.

In the area of Aging and Disability Services, Program #25024 – Adult Protective Services Financial Abuse is a joint offer with the District Attorney's Office that is designed to investigate financial abuse/exploitation against seniors and persons with disabilities. Financial abuse is the second highest form of abuse in this population. Program #25026B – Expand Public Guardian Capacity would enable additional, highly vulnerable persons with severe disabilities to receive needed services. The Public Guardian's office has had to turn away clients over the years because of lack of money and personnel to provide needed, crucial services. This program would help alleviate that problem. In addition, within the last few weeks, Program #25023 – ADS Long Term Care has been split into two A and B offers similar to what was done last year. Since this could cause confusion and result in

one of these crucial offers not being purchased, we are recommending funding for *both* Program #25023A and Program #25023B.

In the area of the SUN Service System, Program 25145C – SUN Community Schools Expansion will serve 1,500 students through five new SUN Community School sites and Touchstone staff located in schools with the most vulnerable populations. Program #25147C – SUN Service System: Touchstone: Billable would add staff capacity to facilitate billing Medicaid for important mental health services. Program #25150B – Anti-Poverty Services-System for Homeless & Low Income seeks to double system capacity to serve more households and improve the quality of services for this vulnerable population.

In the area of Community Services, Program #25119B Energy Services – Maintain Current Service Level would ensure that approximately 14,000 fixed and low-income households have access to safe and sufficient energy in their homes. Program #25124 – Diversion would provide community-based and culturally specific intervention for youth involved in low-severity misdemeanors and ordinance violations. Program #25133B – Housing Stabilization-Maintain Current Service Level allows current service levels to be maintained for three facilities-based and one teen parent transitional housing programs.

In the area of Domestic Violence, Program #25040B – Assuring Quality DV Community Response will provide a county position that is essential to assure a high quality, effective response to Domestic Violence across our community. Program #25040C – Community-based DV Services for African Immigrants addresses a critical emerging need by providing outreach services and community education regarding domestic violence to African immigrant victims of DV and their communities. Program #25041 – DV Prevention for School-aged Children provides DV education/intervention to children (K-5), and training and technical assistance to SUN middle and high school staff, parents and others.

In conclusion, while we don't envy your task of having to rank these DCHS Program Offers, we eagerly look forward to seeing those rankings when they become available. We hope that the Program Offers highlighted in our recommendations will be given a high priority in those rankings.

Sincerely,

The DCHS CBAC:
Steve Weiss, Chair
Lenore Bijan
Mike Delman
John Richmond
James Woods