

GROW'S POSITION ON CUTBACKS to OPWDD

GROW ASSERTS THAT OPWDD HAS BORNE THE BRUNT OF CUTBACKS FOR THE LAST FOUR YEARS AND REQUESTS THAT THERE BE VERY LIMITED FURTHER CUTS:

OPWDD received little if any funds from the Federal stimulus package. Now,

- with only two members representing OPWDD on the Medicaid Redesign Team, and
- another proposed decrease, which could be as high as \$167 million from 2010-2011 or \$334 million with Federal matching funds,

We are concerned that the welfare of persons with developmental disabilities will be placed at risk.

QUALITY ASSURANCE: With system-wide cut backs in personnel already in place, and with further cutbacks proposed, we are greatly concerned with the overall quality of existing programs. Cuts in MSCs as well as personnel doing oversight of existing residences and day programs has the potential for tragedies in the future.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT:

There has been no decrease in the number of people on wait lists in the Hudson Valley DDSO area. At last count it was over 400 in Westchester County. As a result of the proposed cuts, OPWDD is planning to move people to less supervised settings, thereby creating vacancies for people on the wait list. While these less supervised settings are less costly, many of the people selected for them are not ready and do not want to move. In addition the vacancies created are often inappropriate for those awaiting initial placement. Along with less supervised residences we need development of 24 hour supervised residences. While we are planning to meet with OWPDD to explore less costly ways to develop such homes, we fear that with further cuts, there will be little if any new appropriate residential development.

KEEP COLA FOR DIRECT CARE WORKERS:

As it stands now the workers in non-for-profits are forced to have two or three jobs. This directly impacts on their effectiveness in servicing people with developmental disabilities. We urge you to continue the 1.2 percent human services COLA for 2011.

KEEP ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR DAY SERVICES:

There is already a reduction in any new in-home residential habilitation services, and only those in critical need are receiving such services. To reduce funding for workshops, day training, and to encourage more community-based day and employment programs would be an admirable goal if jobs were available. We foresee this reduction in funding resulting in persons with developmental disabilities spending their days in meaningless activities such as visiting malls.

DON'T LET THE MOST VULNERABLE OF OUR CITIZENS BEAR THE BRUNT OF STATE CUTBACKS !!