



Mecklenburg Open Door

Changing Minds. Changing Lives.

Position Statement & What Can I Do? Guide June 25, 2009

POSITION STATEMENT

Restore MH/DD/SA Funding – rate and service cuts place tens of thousands of vulnerable citizens in peril and jeopardize thousands of jobs in NC!

Mecklenburg Open Door calls on our state representatives to restore funding to:

- ***Senate Bill 202, Item #106 – Community Support Services*** – Retain sufficient funding to allow the development and CMS approval of a restructured service. Community Support Services is the core service for 30,000 citizens in NC including 13,000 in Mecklenburg County. It cannot be eliminated without restructuring essential functions.
- ***Senate Bill 202, Item #107 – Adolescent Group Homes*** - Replace/Restructure Children’s Residential Services III and IV, retaining sufficient funding for approval by CMS and transition to the revised service. 500 kids in Mecklenburg County will be on the streets!
- ***Senate Bill 202, Item #114 – DD Case Management Services*** - Case Management funding must be continued until a more effective and efficient system is developed and approved by CMS. Case management is a critical component of the MH/DD/SA service array. We support unduplicated case management that is provided with adequate expertise and intensity to ensure effective and efficient service coordination and delivery.
- ***Senate Bill, Item #103 - Provider Rates*** – Restore rates to providers to maintain life supporting services, keep businesses in business, and save lives/save jobs. MH/DD/SA providers have already been cut –through failure to fund inflationary increases for years while costs have increased substantially.

We support a tax increase to accommodate these restorations.



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WHAT CAN I DO?

1. Write a letter, email or make a phone call to **all** of these people:

House and Senate Leadership

Senate Leadership

Senator Basnight, President Pro Tempore

Email: Marc.Basnight@ncleg.net phone: (919) 733-6854

Senator Rand, Majority Leader

Email: Tony.Rand@ncleg.net phone: (919) 733-9892

Senator Berger, Republican Leader

Email: Phil.Berger@ncleg.net phone: (919) 733-5708

House Leadership

Representative Hackney, Speaker of the House,

Email: Joe.Hackney@ncleg.net Phone: (919)-733-3451

Representative Holliman, Majority Leader

Email: Hugh.Holliman@ncleg.net phone: (919)-715-0873

Representative Stam, Minority Leader

Email: Paul.Stam@ncleg.net phone: (919)-733-2962

2. Write a letter, email or make a phone call to the Chairmen and Mecklenburg representatives on the NC House and NC Senate committee that are now reviewing the budget:

NC House Members on Committee Reviewing Budget:

Senior
Chairman

Representative Mickey Michaux Mickey.Michaux@ncleg.net
Durham District 31 (919)-715-2528

Representative Martha Alexander Martha.Alexander@ncleg.net
Mecklenburg District 106 (919)-733-5807



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Representative Kelly Alexander Kelly.Alexander@ncleg.net
Mecklenburg, District 107 (919) 733-5778

Representative Carney Becky.Carney@ncleg.net
Mecklenburg, District 102 (919) 733-5827

Representative Cotham Tricia.Coatham@ncleg.net
Mecklenburg, District 100 (919) 715-0706

Representative Earle [:Beverly.Earle@ncleg.net](mailto:Beverly.Earle@ncleg.net)
Mecklenburg District 101 (919)715-2530

Representative Mackey Nick.Mackey@ncleg.net
Mecklenberg, District 99 (919) 733-5606

NC Senate Members on Committee Reviewing Budget:

Co-Chairman Senator Linda Garrou, (919) 733-5620
Linda.Garrou@ncleg.net, Forsyth

Co-Chairman Senator Charles W. Albertson (919) 733-5705
Charlie.Albertson@ncleg.net, Duplin, Lenoir, Sampson

Co-Chairman Senator A. B Swindell, (919) 715-3030
AB.Swindell@ncleg.net Nash, Wilson

Co-Chairman Senator Charlie S. Dannelly, (919) 733-5955
Charlie.Dannelly@ncleg.net, Mecklenburg

Senator Daniel G. Clodfelter (919) 715-8331
Daniel.Clodfelter@ncleg.net, Mecklenburg

Senator Malcolm Graham (919) 733-5650
Malcolm.Graham@ncleg.net, Mecklenburg



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3. Ask your friends and family to do the same.
4. Vote according to who supported your cause in the next election!

5. SAMPLE LETTER:

[Today's Date]

Dear [Senator] [Representative] _____,

I currently [receive services] [work] in Mecklenburg County [from] [with] Mecklenburg Open Door, a nationally accredited non-profit agency with a vision to **Transform the Face of Mental ~~Illness~~ Wellness**. I am writing to inform you on my position regarding proposed cuts to mental health services in Senate Bill 202 and the NC budget for next year.

[OPTIONAL: Add a paragraph about services you receive, people you help, what it would be like not to have services.]

With this correspondence, I call upon you as my elected representative to restore funding in the following items:

- **Senate Bill 202, HHS Item #106 – Community Support Services** – Retain sufficient funding to allow the development and CMS approval of a restructured service. Community Support Services is the core service for 30,000 NC citizens and cannot be eliminated without restructuring essential functions.
- **Senate Bill 202, HHS Item #107 – Adolescent Group Homes** - Replace/Restructure Children's Residential Services III and IV, retaining sufficient funding for approval by CMS and transition to the revised service.
- **Senate Bill 202, HHS Item #114 – DD Case Management Services** - Case Management funding must be continued until a more effective and efficient system is developed and approved by CMS. Case management is a critical component of the MH/DD/SA service array. We support unduplicated case management that is provided with adequate expertise and intensity to ensure effective and efficient service coordination and delivery.
- **Senate Bill, HHS Item #103 - Provider Rates** – Restore rates to providers to maintain life supporting services, keep businesses in business, and save lives/save jobs. MH/DD/SA providers have already been cut –through failure



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to fund inflationary increases for years while costs have increased substantially.

Rate and service cuts place thousands of vulnerable Mecklenburg County citizens in peril and jeopardize thousands of jobs as well. These people, including 500 children in Level III and IV group homes and 13,000 receiving community support services in Mecklenburg County, may end up either on the streets, in the shelter, crowding our already clogged psychiatric inpatient services, in jail or, even worse, dead. What costs will we incur for these outcomes when a day in a psychiatric hospital costs the taxpayers of North Carolina ten to fifteen times more than a day of community support services. Moreover, what emergency funding will the General Assembly have to consider ninety days down the road in order to address these issues if the budget is passed? What is the cost of that first suicide that occurs when all this falls apart?

Did you know that North Carolina recently scored a “D” in a National Alliance for Mental Illness study, *“A Report on America’s Health Care System for Adults with Serious Mental Illness”*, joining states like Alabama, Louisiana and South Carolina. Yes we’re grouped with South Carolina! Congratulations.

I support a tax increase specifically to restore these proposed cuts in mental health services. Health & Human Services (HHS) makes up 23% of the state budget yet is required to shoulder 50% of the proposed budget cuts in Senate Bill 202.

[Don’t force me to carry the state’s burden by ending my services].

Sincerely,

[Your Name]