

PCPA Budget Information

March 20, 2003



Next Steps and Helpful Hints for Members

Unprecedented times call for different approaches to this year's state budget process. Recognizing this, PCPA has developed this list to assist members as they address legislators and state and county officials on budget impacts and implications. New legislative directories – ordered for most lobbyists and statewide organizations, including PCPA, from the PA Chamber of Business and Industry – are not yet available. For legislator information specific to an individual agency or location (only an address or zip code is necessary) visit a site hosted by the League of Women Voters at www.capwiz.com/lwv/officials/state/?lv=C&state=pa. A link to the site is also available on the PCPA website under "Critical Links" in the Legislative Section.

When addressing elected officials...

In writing formal letters, officials such as the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, legislators, and Cabinet Secretaries are addressed as "The Honorable". For example, Rep. John Doe would be addressed as "The Honorable John Doe". Salutations are as follows:

- For a governor it should read "Dear Governor Doe";
- For a federal or state senator it should read "Dear Senator Doe";
- For a federal representative it should read "Dear Congressman Doe"; and
- For a state representative it should read "Dear Representative Doe".

Personal member contacts with legislators mean more now than ever before...

PCPA members are strongly urged to continue calling, writing, emailing and visiting state legislators AND the media. The following are helpful hints for areas of discussion:

- **RELATE YOUR INDIVIDUAL AGENCY'S POTENTIAL FALLOUT FROM THIS BUDGET:** number of clients affected; will you lose office positions - how many; will you have to cut services – if so, be specific; what percentage of your operating budget contains either or a combination of BHSI/Act 152/HSDf.
- **RELAY THAT D&A FUNDING WILL BE DRAMATICALLY AFFECTED:** eliminating completely the BHSI line-item (\$47 million) and Act 152 monies (\$18.175 million), not to mention the decrease from \$36.8 million to \$3.5 million the HSDf (Human Services Development Funds - discretionary funds utilized by counties for homelessness issues, substance abuse, etc.) line-item, NUMEROUS individuals will not receive substance abuse treatment; studies show the overall benefits to D&A treatment - reduced physical health care spending, lower crime rates, improved social functioning.
** This year's D&A crisis is used here as an example of funding cuts and implications.*
- **ALLOW TIME FOR AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET:** public and private entities need more than one week to digest and better-understand a several-thousand page budget document - which is written in fine print and includes federal, state and local funding sources; if entities familiar with various areas cannot yet comment on possible impacts and implications of this budget, legislators cannot be well-versed in all areas mentioned and know the effects and ramifications. Since the budget has passed the Legislature, an understanding is necessary so that supplemental legislation can be introduced to address funding cuts.

For more information contact Pennsylvania Community Providers Association
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