



Legislative Priorities and Talking Points 2011 Session Georgia General Assembly

At its meeting held at Lake Lanier Islands, Georgia, on October 19, 2010, the Board of Directors of the Georgia Association of Community Service Boards, Inc., adopted by unanimous vote three legislative priorities for the 2011 session of the Georgia General Assembly.

2011 Legislative Priorities

1. Support the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Budget Proposals for State Fiscal Year 2011 Amended and State Fiscal Year 2012.

If funded by the General Assembly, the proposals will represent a major enhancement and expansion of community-based services for persons with mental illness and individuals with developmental disability. The proposals are part of a five year plan outlined in a settlement agreement announced October 19, 2010, by Governor Purdue and the U.S. Department of Justice to bring Georgia into compliance with the 1999 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Olmstead v. L.C.*, a Georgia case, and the *Americans with Disability Act*. The plan targets 9,000 individuals with mental illness, and effective, July 1, 2011, individuals with developmental disabilities will no longer be admitted to state-operated hospitals.

2. Support the Legislative Agenda of the Georgia Council on Substance Abuse.

The Georgia Council on Substance Abuse supports legislation that would (1) authorize the Georgia State Board of Pharmacy to monitor the prescribing and dispensing certain controlled substances, and (2) promote a public health approach to universal screening for substance use problems, such as the *Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) Program*. The Council supports proposals by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities to expand services to persons with substance use problems so that each of the Department's six regions has a recovery center and a social detoxification center.

3. Support the Legislative Agenda of the Georgia Supportive Housing Association.

The Georgia Supportive Housing Association supports budget proposals to expand substantially housing options for persons with mental illness, and encourages the Department of Community Health to prioritize the allocation of Section 8 federal subsidies for supportive housing rent subsidies as well as expand funding of the Housing Trust Fund from \$3 million to \$5 million.

2011 Legislative Talking Points

1. Support the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Budget Proposals for State Fiscal Year 2011 Amended and State Fiscal Year 2012.

The Department is requesting the following additions in State Funds:

	FY 2011 Amended	FY 2012
New Community Services	\$ 26,216,151	\$ 65,589,869
Additional Developmental Disability Waivers	\$ 3,587,634	\$ 14,556,172
Federal Matching Assistance Program (Medicaid)	\$ 10,387,009	\$ 54,101,830
Forensic Services	\$ 0	\$ 12,500,000
Totals	\$ 40,190,794	\$ 146,747,871

The Department is requesting the following additions in state funds for *New Community Services*:

	FY 2011 Amended	FY 2012
New Community Mental Health Initiatives	\$ 15,328,456	\$ 44,462,079
1. Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Teams	\$ 3,063,402	\$ 8,389,015
2. Community Support Teams	\$ 50,000	\$ 537,080
3. Intensive Case Management	\$ 271,016	\$ 1,046,960
4. Case Management	\$ 0	\$ 255,075
5. Housing Supports	\$ 2,801,001	\$ 7,532,798
6. Supported Employment	\$ 833,076	\$ 1,905,804
7. Peer Supports	\$ 0	\$ 749,100
8. Transition Planning	\$ 1,421,321	\$ 2,840,642
9. Crisis Services	\$ 1,860,502	\$ 5,731,394
10. 1915I Waiver	\$ 0	\$ 1,952,266
11. Training	\$ 0	\$ 592,978
12. Technology	\$ 0	\$ 1,500,000
13. Monitoring and Management	\$ 5,028,138	\$ 11,428,967
New Community Developmental Disabilities Initiatives	\$ 10,887,695	\$ 21,127,790
1. Education and Training	\$ 0	\$ 500,000
2. Crisis, Respite, and Nursing	\$ 9,590,095	\$ 19,130,190
3. Family Supports	\$ 1,297,600	\$ 1,497,600
Total Funding for New Community Initiatives	\$ 25,216,121	\$ 65,589,869

New Community Mental Health Services are designed to serve 9,000 individuals with severe and persistent mental illness (SPMI) who are (1) currently being served in state-operated regional hospitals, (2) frequently readmitted to state-operated regional hospitals, (3) frequently seen in community hospital emergency rooms, and (4) chronically homeless and/or released from jails or prisons. All existing 16 Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Teams and the two new ACT Teams will operate with fidelity with the Dartmouth ACT model.

Additional Developmental Disabilities Waivers in the FY 2011 proposal will provide for 155 new waivers for consumers in state facilities and 100 additional waivers to prevent hospital admissions. In FY 2012, the proposal provides for 150 new waivers for consumers in the state hospitals and 100 additional waivers to prevent admissions to state facilities.

Forensic Services will provide for an additional 100 beds in FY 2012 that will be purchased from private providers to address the needs of 200 individuals awaiting transfer from jails and prisons.

Note: Detailed Explanations of the FY 2011 Amended and FY 2012 Budget Proposal as presented by the Department are attached.

2. Support the Legislative Agenda of the Georgia Council on Substance Abuse.

The Georgia Council on Substance Abuse has identified four 2011 legislative opportunities. These are:

1. Support Patient Safety Act

In the 2010 session of the Georgia General Assembly, State Senator David Shafer and others introduced S.B. 248, which if enacted into law, would have amended Chapter 13 of Title 16 of the O.C.G.A., relating to controlled substances, to provide for the establishment of a program for the monitoring of prescribing and dispensing Schedule II, III, IV, or V controlled substances by the Georgia State Board of Pharmacy. The bill was introduced late in the 2010 session with no chance for passage. As such new legislation creating a Georgia Prescription Monitoring Program will have to be introduced in the 2011 session of the General Assembly.

2. Modify Public Assistance Drug Testing Legislation.

H.B. 1163 introduced by Rep. Ben Harbin and others was not enacted in 2010 session of the General Assembly, and new legislation will be needed in the 2011 session in order for such legislation to be considered again. Had the bill been enacted into law, it would have amended Article 3 of Chapter 8 of Title 34 of the O.C.G.A., relating to the administration of the "Employment Security Law," to require the Department of Labor to develop a program of random drug testing of applicants for unemployment benefits. The bill also amended Article 1 of Chapter 4 of Title 49 of the O.C.G.A., the "Georgia Public Assistance Act of 1965," to require the Department of Human Services to develop a program of random drug testing of applicants for public assistance, and also require that any applicant who refuses to be tested or whose test results in a positive identification of certain substances shall be ineligible to receive public assistance. Rather than legislation such as H.B. 1163, the Georgia Council on Substance Abuse prefers legislation promoting a public health approach to universal

screening for substance use problems, such as the Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) Program.

3. Recovery Centers

Support the request of the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities to fund a recovery center in each of the six regions to promote community-based long term recovery.

4. Social Detoxification

Support the request of Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities to fund a social detox center in each of the six regions to assist in controlling admissions to state hospitals and relieve the current heavy burden on hospital emergency rooms statewide.

Note: A copy of the 2011 legislative agenda of the Georgia Council on Substance Abuse is attached.

3. Support the Legislative Agenda of the Georgia Supportive Housing Association.

The Georgia Supportive Housing Association has identified seven 2011 legislative initiatives. These are:

1. Expand Medicaid funding for persons living in supportive housing.
2. Create 9,000 units of supportive housing over the next five years.
3. Prioritize the allocation of Section 8 federal subsidies for supportive housing rent subsidies.
4. Create full time housing facilitators in each of the regional offices of the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities.
5. Expand funding of the Housing Trust Fund from \$3 million to \$5 million in the Department of Community Affairs.
6. Create a flexible fund to support housing support specialists.
7. Hold an Educational conference for members of the Georgia General Assembly.

Note: A copy of the 2011 legislative agenda of the Georgia Supportive Housing Association is attached.

Prepared October 26, 2010