



Ten Things You Can Do *(Groups and Organizations)*

The Lanterman Coalition, made up of the 21 major stakeholders in California’s community-based developmental service system, is uniting around a single critical goal. Years of underfunding, cuts, rate freezes, old funding formulas, and inflation have hurt service providers and regional centers’ ability to ensure people with developmental disabilities and their families get the services and supports they need. To fix this, our system needs a 10% across-the-board funding increase now, and 5% increases yearly, until funding for provider rates and regional center services is reformed.

Your advocacy matters! Our system is facing a monumental challenge. It’s big, it’s complicated, and there are a lot of moving parts. But we have to start somewhere, and a 10% budget increase for our system is the first step the Lanterman Coalition is rallying around. To make that – and comprehensive reform – happen, we need you to stand up for people with developmental disabilities, their families, service providers, and regional centers. The system that supports people to live in communities of their choosing needs you. Every voice throws light on a part of this common problem we are facing, and we need you to let your light shine!

1) Collaborate!

Step one is reaching out to others. What groups or organizations are you a part of, or do you work with? It can be a service provider, an advocacy organization, a civic organization (Rotary?), or any other group that might be interested. Think big! Anybody that might care about with developmental disabilities will be worth contacting. This historic effort must be bigger than just our small communities – it’s about the whole community! The simple question “do you want to work together?” may get you some surprising results.

2) Get in touch with your Legislator

While each person in the state is represented by one Senator and one Assemblymember, your actual facility may be in another location. Both count! Reach out to your representatives by phone, by letter, even on Twitter and Facebook, and ask them to support a 10% rate increase, coupled with long-term funding reform.

3) Meet your Legislator

If you’ve been able to collaborate and draw together a group of like-minded folks, you are in a great spot to make a huge impact in person. After getting in touch with your Legislator, make a group visit to their district office. All politics is local, and when they can put faces to the stories they hear, it makes a powerful memory.

4) Organize a site visit

Once you know who to contact, reach out to them and extend an invitation to see the services you provide. Legislators from around the state need to hear – and see – how

budget cuts have hurt people with developmental disabilities, their families, and the dedicated providers who are a key component of our state's system of service.

5) Stay in touch

Are you following your Legislators online? Nearly every Legislator has a mailing list, many have Twitter accounts, and quite a few have Facebook accounts. If you can send even one tweet, or make one Facebook post, do it! Share in honest, respectful terms why our system matters, and urge them to support it.

6) Ask your Legislator to talk to Senator Beall about his funding request

Looking for a specific request that can help identify supporters of this reform effort? Senator Beall has [authored a letter to Governor Brown](#) asking him to make developmental services funding a priority. Ask your Legislator to talk to Senator Beall about how they can work together in the Capitol to help our system. And if your representative is one of the seven other Legislators who also signed that letter, thank them!

7) Organize a town hall

If your group has already met with your Legislator, and have developed a rapport with them, you may want to consider organizing a town hall. This isn't a small task, and takes a lot of work – but done right, it can have a **huge** impact.

8) Meet other local officials

You may know your Senator and Assemblymember well, but they represent the entire community. This creates an excellent opportunity for you – reach out to other officials! City Council members, mayors, County supervisors, and fire and police chiefs are all important leaders in the community, and they should know about the people they serve. In the same way you build relationships with state Legislators, create bonds with local officials. This will help today, and it can help tomorrow. After all, a former member of the Los Angeles Community College Board of Trustees is now Governor.

9) Issue a press release

If your group has any press contacts, there are key times during the year when a press release can help shape, or even generate, coverage in the news. If you're not already on a mailing list that discusses things like the state budget, or other key legislative events, sign up today! Letting the media know about things that matter to you – as a group of groups – can bring our system's need for funding reform to the attention of local Legislators in a unique and powerful way.

10) Attend a hearing

If you can get to Sacramento, there are a few key hearings every year at the Capitol that focus on the whole developmental services system. If your organization can attend, there is always time for public comment, and time for you to share your story.

P.S. Please keep in touch, and let us know how it went! Go to www.lantermancoalition.org to get the latest news. Also, while this is a grassroots push, any feedback you have will help us all better focus our work. Have any questions? Get a Legislator to send a letter like Senator Beall's? Learn that they have a family member with a developmental disability? Told directly that this isn't their priority? Sharing the intel will let us ensure that everyone – including you – can make best use of their time and talents! Please go to www.lantermancoalition.org/contact and drop us a line, or email info@lantermancoalition.org!

Link: Senator Beall's Letter – www.lantermancoalition.org/docs/Beall.pdf