

HHSC Exceptional Item (EI)	Support or Oppose	Comments
EI 7: Maintain ECI Services		ECI services are the most cost effective way children with disabilities and developmental delays can reach their full potential. ECI can decrease the need for additional services during K-12.
EI 8: Compliance with New CMS Home and Community-based Services (HCBS) Rules		<p>The new CMS HCBS Rules are a significant improvement to services for people with IDD. Texas will need to invest in HCBS programs to be compliant with the new rules and continue receiving Medicaid funding for these services.</p> <p>Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) HHSC knows the proposed EI is in adequate. What will the updated EI look like? 2) What is HHSC's plan to support people with the most complex support needs? 3) How will HHSC tackle extremely low employment outcomes with their efforts to improve meaningful days for individuals with IDD?
EI 14: Additional funding to maintain SSLCs		<p>The Arc of Texas is concerned about the health, safety and quality of life of individuals residing in an SSLC. Even with an 11.2% rate increase in 2016, reports continue to show troubling issues with SSLCs. According to the 2016 Independent Ombudsman Annual Report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSLCs have a systemic issue in their ability to meet minimum required staff to resident ratios. • All but one SSLC met required staff ratio in 2015. 10/13 SSLCs scored worse in 2016 than in 2015 for staffing ratios. • Poor training for direct support staff on resident's behavior support needs and level of support needs.
EI 15: Maintain Contingency Funding for the Legacy Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) Programs Provided in Special Provision 56, Contingency for Senate Bill 208, 2016- 17 GAA.		Funding would maintain General Revenue provided to HHSC for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing program transferred from DARS.

<p>El 16: Community Care Waivers for Diversion and Transition from Institutionalized Settings (3,146 Promoting Independence Slots)</p>		<p>These Promoting Independence Waiver Slots provide funding to keep people out of more costly, institutional settings. During the 2016/2017 biennium, these slots have been extremely successful saving the state money and ensuring people with IDD are in the least restrictive setting.</p>
<p>El 17: New Construction and/or Maintenance and Repairs for Mental Health State Hospitals and State Supported Living Centers.</p>		<p>The Arc of Texas is concerned that this EI requests funding to build a new SSLC. While there may be a need for more State Hospital beds, there is not a need for new construction of SSLCs. Since 2000, the demand for services at an SSLC and census have decreased by 75% and is projected decline by an additional 45% by 2019. A new facility will not address the core issues with SSLCs or improve outcomes for the IDD system.</p>
<p>El 19: Fleet Operations — Vehicle Replacement, Maintenance, and Repair. Funding would replace approximately 222 vehicles projected to be between 6 and 10 years old and over 100,000 miles during the 2018-19 biennium.</p>		<p>The Arc of Texas understands the importance of reliable and safe transportation. During a budget shortfall and concerns that life-saving services could be delayed or reduced, we feel Texas' limited resources can be used more efficiently to support the immediate needs of Texans. This is a more appropriate ask during budget surplus years.</p>
<p>Items Not Included in Updated HHSC LAR</p>	<p>Support</p>	<p>Comments</p>
<p>1915 (c) Waitlist List Reduction for Community-based Waivers for Texans with IDD.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCS • CLASS • DBMD • TxHmL 		<p>There are more than 113,000 Texans with IDD waiting up to 12 years for important community-based services. The waitlist for community-based waivers continues to grow. From 2015 to 2017, the waitlist has grown more than 20%. These Waivers provide critical services such as, personal assistance, habilitation, supported employment, transportation, and more. Without any reduction in FY 18/19, the wait time would increase to 14 years. Reducing the waitlist in future biennium would be even more challenging.</p>
<p>Comprehensive Behavior Support Services</p>		<p>Texas Medicaid does not currently have a comprehensive ABA or behavior intervention benefit for individuals 21 or younger who have been prescribed such services as medically necessary. This Texas Medicaid issue is pending before a federal court in San Antonio.</p>



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Attendant Wage Increase		Personal attendants for many individuals with disabilities are the foundation of support that allows them to lead independent, meaningful lives. Attendants need adequate pay in order to continue their work. We fear that if we cannot maintain an adequate number of personal attendants, then individuals will resort to more expensive institutional settings.
Cost Containment Measures	Oppose	Comments
Rate Reduction in HSC/TxHmL CFC PAS/HAB		HHSC has proposed a 21% rate reduction in attendant wages for individuals using the HCS or TxHmL waiver. Lower rates have proven to increase turnover, make it hard to find a trustworthy attendant and put individuals at risk of using costly, institutional alternatives. There is a significant workforce shortage already in programs with low rates and this cut will increase the likelihood that Texans with IDD won't be able to find the personal attendants they need to live in the community.
Restore Rates for Childrens' Therapy Services (different than HCS/TxHmL CFC PAS/HAB)		Speaker Straus has indicated that the House will work to restore funding to therapy rates for children with disabilities that were authorized during the 84 th Legislative Session in Rider 50. The Arc of Texas supports restoring these rates.
Relocation Specialist Funding		HHSC's proposed budget cuts \$5 million from relocation services. Their reasoning indicates that efforts are duplicated and should be managed by an MCO. The Arc of Texas is concerned that MCOs are not equipped, prepared or have the experience to provide relocation services to an individual transitioning out of an institutional setting. MCOs typically do purchase transitional necessities like dishes, install disability-related home modifications or help with housing deposits. Please keep this minimal funding with the Independent Living Centers because they are the organizations best prepared to deliver this service.



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