

**From:** Darla Letourneau [mailto:letournd@comcast.net]

**Sent:** Friday, April 16, 2010 8:59 PM

**To:** Senator Durell Peaden (Peaden.durell.web@flsenate.gov); rich.nan.web@flsenate.gov; Rep. Joe Negron (joe.negron@myfloridahouse.gov); Senator Eleanor Sobel (sobel.eleanor.web@flsenate.gov); Senator Mike Haridopolos (haridopolos.mike.web@flsenate.gov); Rep. Thompson/Katie Dickerson (katie.dickerson@myfloridahouse.gov); Rep. Yolly Roberson (yolly.roberson@myflorida.gov)

**Cc:** Rep. Gary Aubuchon (gary.aubuchon@myfloridahouse.gov); Rep. Ken Roberson (ken.roberson@myfloridahouse.gov); Rep. Nick Thompson (nick.thompson@myfloridahouse.gov); Rep. Paige Kreegel (paige.kreegel@myfloridahouse.gov); Rep. Trudi Williams (trudi.williams@myfloridahouse.gov); Senator Dave Aronberg (aronberg.dave.web@flsenate.gov); Senator Garrett (richter.garrett.web@flsenate.gov); Senator Mike Bennett (bennett.mike.web@flsenate.gov)

**Subject:** Fund mental health & substance abuse programs

**Importance:** High

Health & Human Services Appropriations Committee Members:

I am a resident of Lee County and, as a member of the Zonta Club of Sanibel-Captiva, I have worked with SWFAS (Southwest Florida Addiction Services) for over 10 years, and know firsthand the important work that they're doing for our community and the successes they have had, one person at a time, as they move through the Transitional Living Center. In these tough times, the demand for their services have increased at the same time as their resources are threatened with reduction.

It is imperative that our state elected officials find ways to cost-effectively meet the needs of the citizens of Florida, especially those citizens who are suffering the most. As more and more people lose their jobs, their homes, and their dignity, we see more people with substance abuse and mental health issues, more child abuse cases, and more homelessness. I am very concerned that the Senate budget does not fund

mental health and substance abuse projects (\$15.2 million) and it does not fund substance abuse treatment in the TANF program (\$4.6 million). I urge you not to cut funds for substance abuse and mental health programs.

Please support the House position which includes:

- No cuts to the base funding for mental health and substance abuse services
- Funding the community MH/SA projects
- Funding for Substance Abuse treatment in the TANF program
- Funding for the MH/SA Reinvestments grants and SAMH Corporation

I hope I can count on your support so that these desperately needed addiction and mental health services can continue. Thank you.

Darla

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