

Dear Friends:

As you know, the current economic climate is a difficult one not only for CWI but for NYS as a whole. I am sure you have seen Governor Andrew Cuomo on television promoting his 2013/2014 budget encouraging all of us to contact our legislators to voice opinions and to push for an on time budget which goes into effect April 1, 2013.

Late last week, the Governor announced that some amendments to his proposed budget were needed to address a \$500 Million shortfall as a result of federal funding reductions to New York State. \$380 Million of this will come through budget adjustments impacting the NYS Department of Health's Medicaid spending. The remaining \$120 Million will be removed from the budget of NYS Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD). It was also announced that this \$120 Million will flow down and impact providers such as CWI and our sister agencies throughout NYS. To achieve this level of budget cut, OPWDD is proposing a 6% across the board funding cut to all voluntary service providers like CWI.

For CWI, these cuts could be devastating and amount to a loss of funding which could easily exceed **ONE MILLION DOLLARS**. All of us at CWI are very concerned of what this impact could mean to the quality and level of services we are able to deliver to those who need it the most. We are also very concerned about the impact this could have on our dedicated staff who work tirelessly to provide meaningful and caring services every day. It is important to note that less than two years ago, we received a funding cut of 1.2 Million dollars, another funding cut to us and our sister agencies throughout the state would be devastating to those we serve, some of the state's most vulnerable citizens.

As of now, this is still just a PROPOSED BUDGET. There is still time for us to advocate and make our voices heard in Albany. Both the Assembly and the Senate must approve the budget before it becomes law. I strongly urge you to contact your local Assemblyman and our Senator, Betty Little and share your concerns about these cuts. I have attached some talking points to use and the contact information for Assemblyman Dan Stec, Assemblyman Tony Jordan, and Senator Betty Little to call or write to them to express your concerns. We will also be planning personal visits with them to educate and advocate in the very near future. We need to have a united voice to eliminate these proposed cuts.

Please do not hesitate to call me to discuss this further or if you have questions.

Sincerely,