Advocacy ACTION NEEDED:

Several of the proposed cuts to balance the state budget DIRECTLY IMPACT the individuals with disabilities that we serve AND their families. Please CONTACT your Legislator now on our behalf, and urge them to vote as follows:

ALCOHOL and TOBACCO Taxes: Should be passed
Raising state taxes on tobacco and alcohol will at the same time increase the amount of money the state receives from matching federal funds. For every 40 cents the state collects on the sale of these items, we can collect another 60 cents from the federal government.

SUPPORTS & CHILDREN’S CHOICE Waivers: Should not be cut
Remind legislators that the NOW waiver is not the only support service needed by the individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families. Other forms of assistance such as Children’s Choice, the Supports Waiver, EarlySteps/Early Intervention and Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) are critical services for individuals with disabilities and their families.

NOW Waiver/Supported Independent Living (SIL): Should not be cut
Make sure your Legislators know that SIL services are the Lifeline for the many individuals with disabilities who have no family. Cutting SIL services will result in much higher costs to the state, as these people will have to be transferred from their own homes to costly state-operated facilities.

EarlySteps/EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES: Should not be cut
If the EarlySteps program is eliminated, children who need Early Intervention Services will have very few options, if any, for therapy and special instruction. Pediatric Day Health Centers (PDHC) are one such option in cities where they exist. Those services cost the state 3 times more than it costs to bring services to the child’s home or natural and inclusive environment (typical day care centers). PDHC services should be provided only! to children with high medical needs. School aged children who need additional Intervention services can and should receive those services at school.

LRS – Louisiana Rehabilitation Services: Should not be cut
Explain that LRS supports employment for adults with disabilities, enabling them to work, earn a paycheck and pay taxes. Cutting out LRS services would mean these individuals would lose their jobs, forcing them to rely on more governmental services such as food stamps, housing assistance, SSI, etc.