



# STATE OF IOWA

THOMAS J. VILSACK, GOVERNOR  
SALLY J. PEDERSON, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
JESSIE K. RASMUSSEN, DIRECTOR

October 29, 2002

The Honorable Governor Vilsack:

The State of Iowa has created a service delivery system for individuals with Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities that is administered by county governments. This system is managed well and is operating successfully. The array of available services is identified in the county management plans and is accessible to those people needing services and supports. The system has integrated people with disabilities into our communities allowing them to become productive citizens to the greatest extent possible and improving their quality of life.

The current population of the State of Iowa is approximately 3 million people. One-third of the population, represented by 19 counties, is in critical need of funding for the services and supports being delivered in those counties. The next one-third of the population, represented by 30 counties, does have or will have significant funding problems in providing the necessary services and supports needed. The remaining 50 counties, representing the last one-third of the population, can maintain their services, but will need to modify services levels if the current growth funding is continued.

The numbers of counties maximizing the services fund levies are increasing while ending fund balances are anticipated to continue to decline. County resources are being stretched to the maximum. Many counties are submitting plan amendments that are:

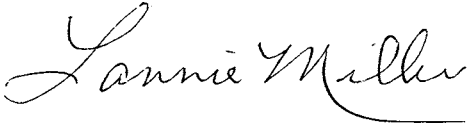
- tightening the financial eligibility requirements,
- decreasing the number of services and supports available,
- limiting services and supports to CMI and DD populations,
- instituting waiting lists,
- and reducing the disability populations that will be served,

in order to be able to financially support those people who are mandated by code to receive services. Recommendations, by the State/County Management Committee, for growth dollar funding levels have been drastically reduced over the years.

The MH/DD Commission understands the fiscal constraints the State of Iowa has been experiencing and acknowledges the funding of \$19 million for MHDD services for FY2004. Funding at this level is inadequate for the growth of the service system and will not relieve the financial pressure on those counties serving two thirds of the population. The Commission believes it is the duty of the Government of Iowa to provide its citizens with disabilities the ability to choose where they live, where they will work and where they will socialize. Supports and services need to be provided to help these citizens. The MHDD Commission strongly believes that the State of Iowa should be a leader in embracing the Real Choices Systems Change (Olmstead) and in supporting individuals with disabilities and should not be balancing the state budget on the backs of people who have limited resources. Maintenance of a workable service level in counties will require a minimum of \$45 million for FY2005 to fund important programs and handle increased participation levels.

The Commission would like to submit documented expenditures and fund balances for FY2002, in January (when they become available). The information that is currently available is for FY 2001 (prior to the cut in growth appropriations) and does not reflect the financial constraints being experienced at the present time.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lannie Miller". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Respectfully,".

Lannie Miller  
Chairman, MHDD Commission