

ACTION ALERT

From WASAVP

The Washington Association for Substance Abuse and Violence Prevention

For Immediate Release: May 26, 2009

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The FY 2010 federal budget proposed by President Obama would eliminate the \$4.7M Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Grant to State of Washington that supports the Community Mobilization Program and School-based drug and violence prevention services.

The budget proposed by the President for FY 2010 would zero out the entire \$294.8 million that funds the State Grants portion of the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities (SDFSC). Elimination of the \$4.7M portion of these funds awarded to Washington State would dismantle the drug and violence prevention services in Washington's public schools as well as the 38-County Community Mobilization Program that has provided a statewide infrastructure for substance abuse and violence prevention since 1988.

An alternative also under consideration would convert SDFSC from a state formula grant to a competitive grant program.

It's important to Community Mobilization (CM) that SDFSC continue as a state formula grant:

- CM receives \$1.48M of the \$4.7M SDFSC funds allocated to Washington State. This represents 44% of the funds allocated to Community Mobilization programs. Washington State matches the SDFSC funding with \$2.3M in state revenues. Every state and federal dollar received by Community Mobilization Programs leverages an average of \$5 in additional community level funding and resources.
- The Community Mobilization Programs in Washington's counties are lead by local policy boards with representation from parents, schools, law enforcement, community organizations and local governments. The policy board for each county studies the research and indicator data identifying the substance abuse and violence issues impacting their communities.

- The policy boards develop local strategies that mobilize their communities to reduce substance abuse and violence and to prevent future problems.
- When the Methamphetamine epidemic was raging in Washington State, the Community Mobilization Programs provided a local infrastructure that made it possible to leverage a small amount of federal meth initiative funds to create a statewide network of local Meth Action Teams. The Meth Action Teams were largely responsible for the success of Washington State's efforts that nearly eliminated Meth drug labs in our state. This same local level infrastructure is now being used in many communities as a base for coordinating efforts to fight prescription drug abuse and to coordinate local action to deal with street gang problems.

In 2007- 2008 Community Mobilization provided 76,832 hours of drug and violence prevention programming to 223,461 youth and adults.

Community Mobilization programs demonstrate significant cost-benefit savings for public services. For example, the *Strengthening Families* programs provided in many counties have shown a \$7.82 benefit in reduced social costs for every \$1 of public funds invested.

It's important to schools and districts that SDFSC continue as a state formula grant:

- Elimination of this program has major implications for the prevention work done in schools, totally dismantling the drug and violence prevention infrastructure currently in place in every LEA in Washington State. This would leave the vast majority of our schools and students without drug and violence prevention programming.
- In Washington State, SDFSC serves as foundational funding that is leveraged and combined with other resources in a collaborative effort to fund substance abuse prevention efforts in schools across the state, including the Student Assistance Prevention Intervention Services Program. This program provides Universal Prevention Programs to youth and Intervention Programming to youth identified as needing services.
- Substance use prevention is critical to ensuring the overall academic success of our youth, and more specifically, to ensuring that they score better on the tests required by the No Child Left Behind Act.

It is well known that early intervention is a good investment – every \$1 spent on early intervention services yields \$7 savings through decreased truancy, violence, disciplinary problems, security issues and other expenses.

Youth involved in this program show significant declines in destructive behaviors: 23% decrease in alcohol use, a 28 % decrease in marijuana use, 15% decrease in fighting at school, 10% decrease in school suspensions.

A study by the University of Washington found that lower reading and math scores are linked to peer substance abuse. On average, students whose peers avoided substance use had test scores (measured by the Washington Assessment of Student Learning reading and math scores) that were 18 points higher for reading, and 45 points higher for math. Other studies also show that students who use alcohol or other drugs are up to five times more likely to drop out of school.

Why making SDFSC funds competitive won't work for Washington State:

- A major problem with changing this funding source into a competitive grant is that it would destroy the statewide CM and School-based infrastructure in all counties and school districts across the state of Washington. Continuation of this infrastructure requires a formula based distribution that assures a statewide network for planning and coordination of efforts to fight substance abuse and violence.
- Replacing the state formula grant that supports the statewide infrastructure with competitive funding will create one time projects that can not be sustained when competitive grant award funds run out. It would replace a successful, statewide infrastructure with a patchwork of single focus, uncoordinated efforts.

What you can do:

- Individual letters are important, but also be sure that you have responded using the automated CADCA (Community Antidrug Coalitions of America) CapWiz link: <http://capwiz.com/cadca/home/>.
- An individual letter template is attached to assist you with drafting letters to Washington's congressional delegation.
- Fax or email letters to the Senators and Congress members who make up Washington State delegation in Washington DC. Let them know that you want the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities grant funds to continue, and to be distributed to States as a formula grant.

Senate

Patty Murray
O: (202) 224-2621
F: (202) 224-0238

Maria Cantwell
O: (202) 224-3441
F: (202) 224-3441

House

Jay Inslee (1st)
O: (202) 225-6311
F: (202) 226-1606

Rick Larsen (2nd)
O: (202) 225-2605
F: (202) 225-4420

Brian Baird (3rd)
O: (202) 225-3536
F: (202) 225-3478

Doc Hastings (4th)
O: (202) 225-5816
F: (202) 225-3251

Cathy McMorris Rodgers (5th)
O: (202) 225-2006
F: (202) 225-3392

Norman D. Dicks (6th)
O: (202) 225-5916
F: (202) 226-1176

Jim McDermott (7th)
O: (202) 225-3106
F: (202) 225-6197

Dave Reichert (8th)
O: (202) 225-7761
F: (202) 225-4282

Adam Smith (9th)
O: (202) 225-8901
F: (202) 225-5893

Secretary of Education

Arne Duncan
F: (202) 401-0596

Dear _____:

The FY 2010 federal budget proposed by President Obama would eliminate the \$4.7M Safe and Drug Free Communities Grant to the State of Washington that supports the Community Mobilization Program and vital drug and violence prevention services in the schools.

The budget proposed by the President for FY 2010 would zero out the entire \$294.8 million that funds the State Grants portion of the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities (SDFSC). Elimination of the \$4.7M portion of these funds awarded to Washington State would dismantle the *effective* drug and violence prevention services in Washington's public schools as well as the 38-county Community Mobilization Program that has provided a statewide infrastructure for community substance abuse and violence prevention since 1988.

An alternative also under consideration would convert SDFSC from a state formula grant to a competitive grant program.

It is important to student and citizens of Washington State that Community Mobilization (CM) and the current SDFSC program continue as a state formula grant:

- CM receives \$1.48M of the \$4.7M SDFSC funds allocated to Washington State. This represents 44% of the funds allocated to Community Mobilization programs. Washington State matches the SDFSC funding with \$2.3M in state revenues. Every state and federal dollar received by Community Mobilization Programs leverages an average of \$5 in additional community level funding and resources.
- The Community Mobilization Programs in Washington's counties are lead by local policy boards with representation from parents, schools, law enforcement, community organizations and local governments. The policy board for each county studies the research and indicator data indentifying the substance abuse and violence issues impacting their communities. The policy boards develop local strategies that mobilize their communities to reduce substance abuse and violence and to prevent future problems.
- When the methamphetamine epidemic was raging in Washington State, the Community Mobilization Programs provided a local infrastructure that made it possible to leverage a small amount of federal meth initiative funds to create a statewide network of local Meth Action Teams. The Meth Action Teams were largely responsible for the success of Washington State's efforts that nearly eliminated meth drug labs in our state. This same local level infrastructure is now being used in many communities as a base for coordinating efforts to fight prescription drug abuse and to coordinate local action to deal with street gang problems.

In 2007-2008, Community Mobilization Programs across the state provided 76,832 hours of drug and violence prevention programming to 223, 461 youth and adults.

In _____ County (insert your own information here)

Community mobilization (CM) programs have demonstrated significant cost-benefit savings for public services. For example, the *Strengthening Families* programs provided in many counties have shown a \$7.82 benefit in reduced social costs for every \$1 of public funds invested.

Making SDSFC funds competitive won't work for Washington State:

- A major problem with turning this funding source into a competitive grant is that it would destroy the statewide CM infrastructure for community mobilization in all counties across the state of Washington. Continuation of this infrastructure requires a formula-based distribution that assures a statewide network for planning and coordination of mobilization efforts to fight substance abuse and violence.
- Replacing the state formula grant that supports the statewide CM infrastructure with competitive funding will create one time projects that cannot be sustained when competitive grant award funds run out. It would replace a successful statewide infrastructure with a patchwork of single focus, uncoordinated efforts.

The continuation of the funding for the SDFSC program in its current form and the Community Mobilization (CM) Program in Washington State is essential to the safety, health, and future success of our youth and communities.

I hope that you will support funding the State Grants portion of the SDFSC program at a minimum of the FY 2009 appropriated level of \$294.8 million in the FY 2010 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations Bill.

Thank you for considering my views.

Sincerely,