



January 23, 2017

The Honorable John Bel Edwards
Governor, State of Louisiana
P. O. Box 94004
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

Dear Governor Edwards,

The Board of Directors of the Louisiana Partnership for Children and Families recognizes that children and families become targets of budget cuts because they have no lobby. As expressed in our Platform for Children and Families, the rhetoric frequently heard about families and family values doesn't translate to support services required for children to thrive. We believe that it is time to do the things actually necessary to promote and maintain evidence-based programs for the wellbeing of children. And, it is time to find the political will to prioritize the needs of children and no longer continue to balance the budget on the backs of our children.

The proposed cuts by Representative Lance Harris demonstrate once again that services for children and families are vulnerable and children become the victims. We believe that his solution will cost more in the long run than the savings in the budget cuts will produce. When health services aren't provided, it creates an impact on children's ability to develop, learn, and be successful in school. Without such supports, we are exacerbating the cradle to prison pipeline.

The Rainy Day Fund was created to ameliorate problems when revenues were inadequate for a variety of reasons. It is clear that the efforts in last year's special session were inadequate to meet budget requirements and that the state has experienced significant costs related to the natural disasters that have occurred across the state. It is unconscionable to consider that we should make draconian cuts to services for children and families when the Rainy Day Fund could partially offset the deficit.

We urge you to continue to make children a priority.

Sincerely,


Sherry S. Guarisco
Executive Director