

Fully Fund Regional Mental Health & Disability Services



Community Support Advocates

Legislative Day February 2017

We ask you to adopt a **permanent and sustainable fix to funding** regional mental health and disability services.

What we have currently...

Currently, regional health and disability services are paid for by a portion of the collected property taxes. The amount of the tax levy was frozen at the dollar amount in 1996. As populations grow, and more individuals need services using the money, the amount levied for services remains the same.

What we need...

Restore local control and increase sustainability by authorizing counties to set their per person property tax levy for mental health programs and services at a level needed to meet local needs.

Allow local control over setting the levy with a cap of \$47.28. We believe that local elected officials, such as the County Board of Supervisors, should be able to determine what is needed. Each Region has different needs and fund balances. Local control would allow Regions to equitably levy for each Region's needs. Local control with State oversight would allow a customized solution with both local and State accountability.

What is at risk...

If a permanent and sustainable fix to funding regional mental health and disability services is not found, critical services to some of our most at risk community members will be cut.



"With Regional funds, my daughter Erin has a support system that has allowed her to grow into an independent, confident adult who has roommates, an internship that can lead to a job, and public transportation to get around the city. She will lose all of this without the funds the Region sets aside for people with developmental delays. Please allow Regions to levy as needed so Erin and others can continue to be a part of their community."
- Deb Hobbs



People living with a disability deserve the right to live independently

Polk County—1996

Collected \$46.30 per capita from taxes (\$16.4 million)

Population was 349,560

Average incomes were \$25,946

Polk County—2015

Collected \$30.62 per capita from taxes (\$14.4 million)

Population was 460,000

Average incomes were \$48,118

Twenty Years Later:

- Polk County collects \$2 million less in taxes, but the population has grown by more than 132,000 more people.
- Average per capita incomes during this time have doubled

Polk County FY 2018

Budget to maintain services: \$21,009,207

Property tax funds available: \$14, 439,175

Amount Polk County **Needs: \$6,370,032** for expenses vs. revenues

Without a fix, the Polk County Region will be forced to cut services to 900 people.

Services such as community living, employment, rent subsidies, and other services that allow people with disabilities to live independently in their community.

This is NOT just a Polk County problem. Many regions are, or will be experiencing shortfalls.

Tara, age 24, with Huntington's disease, receives support to have cleaning services, housing support, socialization, community integration, and health and safety services. **Without these services she will have to move into a Nursing Home.**

Don, age 20, has Pervasive Developmental Disorder, receives supported employment, socialization, community engagement, and assistance in learning skills to be able to move into his own apartment. **Without these services he will continue to need to live with his parents.**

Chris, age 68 with Developmental disabilities, receives support with medications, maintaining her housing, assistance in processing/completing benefits paperwork, boundaries, finances, time management and healthy socialization. **Without these services she would likely be homeless.**

Molly, age 31 with Spina bifida, borderline intellectual functioning with learning disabilities. Needs support with daily personal care and health and safety needs. She currently receives 24 hour support and lives with roommates in her own home. **Without this support she will have to move into a nursing home.**