Brain Injury Association of Virginia

Virginia Alliance of Brain Injury Service Providers

2023 Legislative Needs Statement

**WHAT:**

*Inclusion of full-time employees of DARS’ state-funded Brain Injury Services program contractors in Item #483 T.1.d. of the FY2023-24 Appropriations Act.*

**PATRONS AND ITEM NUMBERS:**

**WHY:**

Since 1989, there have only been 18 years when new funds were appropriated for brain injury services in Virginia. All but one of these appropriations were tied to the development of new programs rather than investments in current services.

This creates great difficulty for the state funded brain injury programs who are being hit with rising costs, rising wage pressures, and rising employee turnover. In southwest Virginia, the attrition rate was 20% for the last fiscal year; it was 50% for the Brain Injury Association of Virginia.

This amendment would include brain injury services contractors for DARS in groups that are eligible to receive raises when they are given to state employees. We have a companion budget amendment for the 2023 General Assembly session seeking money for investments in workforce retention. We continue to ask for these increases because we have no other mechanisms for obtaining raises. Had we been included in the language that appears in this section of the budget, we would have gotten a 5% raise July 1, equaling more than $350,000 to address continued salary and benefit shortfalls.

**Current Language**

Central Appropriations: *Full-time employees of Community Services Boards, Centers for Independent Living, secure detention centers supported by Juvenile Block Grants, juvenile delinquency prevention and local court service units, local social services boards, local pretrial services act and Comprehensive Community Corrections Act employees, and local health departments where a memorandum of understanding exists with the Virginia Department of Health.* <https://budget.lis.virginia.gov/item/2022/2/HB30/Enrolled/1/483/>

**Requested Amendment**

Central Appropriations: *Full-time employees of Community Services Boards, Centers for Independent Living,* ***state funded brain injury programs****, secure detention centers supported by Juvenile Block Grants, juvenile delinquency prevention and local court service units, local social services boards, local pretrial services act and Comprehensive Community Corrections Act employees, and local health departments where a memorandum of understanding exists with the Virginia Department of Health.*