

Dane County Budget Hearing
August 31, 2011

Good evening . To county Executive Falk, Human Services director Green and County Board members and staff, Thank you for this opportunity to speak on the draft budget proposal for Dane County's 2011 budget for serving those of our fellow citizens who are in need. My Name is Ken Hobbs, and I am President, Arc-Dane County Board of Directors. We are an advocacy organization serving persons with disabilities and their family members.

First, let me applaud those who have put together the draft budget, a very large task and carrying with it much responsibility to serve many in our county. There is a lot to like in this budget, regardless of the difficult times we face as a society who looks toward an America that has an equal opportunity for all. Our economy is down, but our spirits and expectations are high.

For those who are not employed, hungry and have difficulties over which they have no control, this budget provides real assistance. In like manner, for those who are exiting high school special education programs, it is heartening to see that they will be able to move into the adult service system and not be left out on a waiting list. There are services for those who need mental health assistance, although this amount of resources is unhappily less than the need.

We look with concern at the 3% cut in services for adults with Developmental Disabilities. We are aware of several issues relating to state/county discussions that are ongoing. It seems reasonable to ask that as many dollars remain in Dane county as possible. We ask for flexibility in working out changes.

As you are aware, The Arc is ready to assist with planning for change. It does seem very likely that a change is needed to respond to cuts and other proposals that are facing us. We embrace change that has the possibility of keeping services for our people and their families and believe Dane County has the brains and the will to make lemonaid out of our current crop of lemons.

Thank You.

Ken Hobbs
President
The Arc-Dane County