

Budget & Disability Policy Brief:

Legislation passed by the 2016 KY General Assembly

- *The 2016 Budget was very austere and most state agencies experienced 4.5% to 9% cuts in baseline budgets for fiscal years 2016-2018. The Governor granted an exemption to Medicaid, a very important program for many of our constituents with DD-ID and their families. The Legislature upheld this exemption. There were some cuts in human services, but the programs (Waivers) serving folks with DD-ID actually received a modest increase.*

- **House Bill 303 (Budget Bill):**

- *Additional appropriations for people with Developmental Disabilities:*

- *(a) Supports for Community Living - 41 additional slots in fiscal year 2016-2017 and 130 additional slots in fiscal year 2017-2018 for a total of 171 new slots added over the 2016- 2018 fiscal biennium;*

- *(b) Acquired Brain Injury - 8 additional long-term care slots in each fiscal year for a total of 16 new slots added over the 2016-2018 fiscal biennium; and*

- *(c) Michelle P - 83 additional slots in fiscal year 2016-2017 and 166 additional slots in fiscal year 2017-2018 for a total of 249 new slots added over the 2016-2018 fiscal biennium.*

- **House Bill 74 Senate Bill 79 (the ABLE ACT):**

A good first step toward more financial independence for people with disabilities, the ABLE ACT is intended to protect people from losing public benefits (SSI, Medicaid) when they save up to \$14,000 per year in an ABLE Account. The Treasurer's Office and stakeholders will study options for covering administrative costs and report back to the Legislature by the end of 2016.

"amend KRS 205.200 to disregard any amount in an ABLE account, any contributions to an ABLE account, and any distribution from an ABLE account for qualified expenses for the purposes of determining an individual's eligibility for a means-tested public assistance program and the amount of assistance or benefits the individual is eligible to receive under the program; direct the State Treasurer, the Secretary of the Finance and Administration Cabinet, the Executive Director of the Commonwealth Council on

Developmental Disabilities, and the Executive Director of the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority to work cooperatively to seek all available sources of

funding to defray the start-up costs associated with establishing ABLE accounts within the Commonwealth and report to the Legislative Research Commission on or before December 31, 2016."

Senate Bill 60

Increases protection for vulnerable victims of violent and sexual crimes. Often children and victims with disabilities have difficulty remembering specific dates & times when offering testimony. This legislation makes it easier to admit & hear testimony from vulnerable victims who can describe a "continuing course of conduct" (e.g. Repeated abuse) but may not recall specific dates due to limitations of their disability or age.