Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program
May 13, 2015

Protest Rallies against Proposed DMH Budget Cuts

The people have spoken.

Faced with budget cuts that would gut mental health services for thousands of Alabamians, hundreds of families, consumers, and advocates rallied Monday in protests held throughout the state.
The signs at the rallies said it all: “Protect Programs,” “Put People First,” “Invest in Me,” “We Are Important,” “We Need To Be Heard,” “Budget Cuts Hurt People Like Me,” and “No Cuts to DMH.”

ADAP Executive Director James Tucker attended the Tuscaloosa rally. In front of a crowd of more than 400 people, he repeated his warning that the proposed cuts increase the chance of litigation on behalf of Alabamians with mental and intellectual disabilities.

Echoing the message he shared with the legislature in a recent letter, Tucker said ADAP will do all within its power to preserve the legal rights of those served by the Department of Mental Health, as laid out in *Wyatt v. Stickney*, ADAP’s mental health class action brought against the Department.

“When Judge Thompson approved the Wyatt settlement in 2003, he warned that if the state fails to shoulder its responsibility, it will find itself back in court as sure as the night follows the day,” said Tucker. "That day now approaches."

Similar rallies were held in other Alabama cities, see stories below on mental health issues in the State of Alabama.

**News Courier**
Wednesday, May 13, 2015
**Meeting to address mental health cuts**
http://www.enewscourier.com/news/local_news/meeting-to-address-mental-health-cuts/article_8abd537c-f908-11e4-87e1-330d3b090e03.html

**Madison County Record**
Tuesday, May 12, 2015
**United Way concerned about slashes in state funding**
http://www.madisoncountyrecord.com/2015/05/12/united-way-concerned-about-slashes-in-state-funding/

**APR**
Tuesday, May 12, 2015
**Gambling bill hearing, potential mental health cuts and Alzheimer's research**
http://apr.org/post/gambling-bill-hearing-potential-mental-health-cuts-and-alzheimers-research

**Birmingham Business Journal**
Tuesday, May 12, 2015
**Demonstrations occur around Alabama in support of mental health programs**
http://www.bizjournals.com/birmingham/morning_call/2015/05/demonstrations-occur-around-alabama-in-support-of.html

**Enterprise Ledger**
Tuesday, May 12, 2015
**Residents raise concerns over possible mental health cuts**
http://www.dothaneagle.com/enterprise_ledger/news/residents-raise-concerns-over-possible-mental-health-cuts/article_ab371b62-f816-11e4-b4ca-e7f7e02f831a.html

**AL.com**
Locking up mentally ill at odds with prison reform
http://www.al.com/opinion/index.ssf/2015/05/locking_up_mentally_ill_at_odd.html

Dothan Eagle
Tuesday, May 12, 2015
Ozark residents rally against mental health funding cuts

Tuscaloosa News
Monday, May 11, 2015
"They're 'not just numbers:' " Hundreds rally in Tuscaloosa for mental health

Anniston Star
Monday, May 11, 2015
Advocates, clients rally for state mental health funding

AL.com
Monday, May 11, 2015
People with disabilities rally to stop budget cuts

WSFA
Monday, May 11, 2015
Mental health supporters rally in Tuscaloosa on Monday

AL.com
Monday, May 11, 2015
On question about mental health, Alabama governor again hints at Medicaid expansion

WAAY
Monday, May 11, 2015
Bentley outlines mental health cuts if tax increase doesn't pass
http://www.waaytv.com/appnews/bentley-outlines-mental-health-cuts-if-tax-increase-doesn-t/article_bc25f0f0-f7f9-11e4-96a0-f34141a5b761.html

WVTM
Monday, May 11, 2015
Supporters rally across Alabama to support mental health services

WBRC
Monday, May 11, 2015
Supporters of Alabama's mental health community come together for rally
http://www.myfoxlal.com/story/29034092/supporters-of-alabamas-mental-health-community-come-
**WIAT**
Monday, May 11, 2015

**Birmingham residents rally for mental health**
http://wiat.com/2015/05/11/birmingham-residents-rally-for-mental-health/

Contact ADAP if you want more information or advocacy assistance; we’re here to help!