

CONSENT CALENDAR
May 22, 2007

To: Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

From: Councilmembers Dona Spring and Darryl Moore

Subject: Budget Referral: Housing And Services For Severely Disabled
Children In West Berkeley

RECOMMENDATION: that the Council refer to the budget FY 07-08 budget process \$15,000 as recommended by the Human Welfare Commission for housing and services for severely disabled children in West Berkeley at project BUiLD.

BACKGROUND: Members of the council are invited to schedule a visit to this model Berkeley program managed by Berkeley parents of severely disabled children. (Please contact the secretary listed below.) The children would all have to be institutionalized in lower quality facilities if this parent controlled housing and care program is not sustained. Please see attached. Please also consider that only a small fraction of city funding goes to youth programs serving disabled youth.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: \$15,000 from the general fund

CONTACT PERSON: Councilmember Dona Spring 981-7140
Councilmember Darryl Moore 981-7120

April 24, 2007

**RE: Community Agency Allocations for FY 2008
Agenda Item #43**

Dear Mayor Bates and City Council Members:

On behalf of the board and staff of the BUiLD house of Berkeley Youth Living with Disabilities, we write to request your support for the \$15,000 funding recommendation of the Human Welfare and Community Action Commission (HWCAC). BUiLD requests funding for general operating support for our residence at 2110 7th St. for the very low-income youth we serve who have significant developmental disabilities. Most of them are wheelchair users and nonverbal. They have seizures and other life-threatening medical conditions. They require assistance with all the daily functions of life. They also are all delightful individuals who are happy to attend Berkeley schools, march in the "How Berkeley Can You Be Parade" shop at the Berkeley Farmers Market and otherwise be part of our Berkeley community.

We note the City Manager's opposition to the funding request, stating that the Housing Trust Fund provided funding for renovation of the BUiLD residence with the expectation that we fund services from other sources. Even *before* we opened our doors in 2002, we have worked extremely hard and successfully to raise nongovernmental funds to supplement Medi-Cal, which provides basic support. We have independently raised hundreds of thousands of dollars from foundation grants, local business and most importantly, individuals and families in Berkeley and around the nation who support our model community-based program for young people with very significant developmental disabilities. We also use volunteers to provide professional services.

In the past year alone we had support from the following Berkeley sources:

- Mechanics Bank
- Bayer
- The staff at Peet's coffee downtown, which voted for BUiLD to receive tips on Christmas Eve
- The UC Berkeley Freshman Sophomore Business Club which held a first annual golfing fundraiser for BUiLD

In previous years we also have received grants from:

- Y&H Soda Foundation
- Five Bridges Foundation
- Morris Stulsaft Foundation
- Franciscan Charities

Most importantly, we raise more than **\$50,000 a year** from the generous individuals on our mailing list of 500 people in Berkeley, the Bay Area and around the nation. We

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have attached a previous fundraising letter for your information.

However our basic funding source, Medi-Cal, is not keeping pace with inflation. In fact, Medi-Cal gave no cost-of-living increase at all to facilities like ours for the 2007 fiscal year, even though staff wages and health care costs, food for residents and home heating costs all increased.

HWCAC's \$15,000 recommendation constitutes only about 4% of our operating budget, but is important in helping us close the budget gap. The City of Berkeley can be proud in giving birth to, hosting and supporting the model program we have established that is committed to having young people with very significant developmental disabilities live full lives in our

community. Our program is well managed and annually passes a rigorous inspection by state licensing inspectors from the Department of Health Services. We have hosted visitors from the Bay Area and from around the world who have come to learn about our model.

We would be pleased to answer any questions you or your staff might have, or have you tour the house and meet the residents. You can also log onto our website, www.buildhouse.org, to view pictures and basic information about our program and the young people we serve. We hope you'll agree that they are deserving of this support from the City of Berkeley.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

RACHEL KASA
BUiLD Secretary
510.520.1375