



# DPC Issue Brief

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for Texans with disabilities.

**Title:** Department of Assistive & Rehabilitative Services (DARS) Vocational Rehabilitation program

**Background:** Vocational Rehabilitation is the federal/state program that assists people with disabilities in achieving employment and economic self-sufficiency. The Department of Assistive & Rehabilitative Services is requesting funds to restore services lost due to previous budget cuts and to meet increased demand related to population growth.

Full funding of DARS Exceptional Items will improve employment opportunities for Texans with disabilities and maximize federal funding. A commitment of \$21,472,185 in State General Revenue will bring \$98,988,412 in Federal Funds to Texas.

**Recommendation:** The Disability Policy Consortium (DPC) recommends that the Texas Legislature supports full funding of Exceptional Items 1 & 2 in the DARS Legislative Appropriations Request.

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**MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS:** *Statewide Members:* Advocacy, Incorporated, Brain Injury Association of Texas, Coalition of Texans with Disabilities, Epilepsy Coalition of Texas, The Institute for Disability Access/ADAPT, Lone Star Association for Persons in Supported Employment, Mental Health Association in Texas, National Alliance for the Mentally Ill of Texas, National Multiple Sclerosis Society of Texas, Texas Advocates, Texas AIDS Network, Texas Association of Centers for Independent Living, Texas Association of the Deaf, Texas Center for Disability Studies/ Texas Technology Access Project, Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities, Texas Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health, Texas Legal Services Center, Texas Mental Health Consumers, Texas State Independent Living Council, Texas State Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, The Center on Disability and Development at Texas A&M University, Council for Families for Children, United Cerebral Palsy of Texas, The Spina Bifida Association of Texas, Inc., and the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance of Texas. *Local Members:* Epilepsy Foundation Central & South Texas. REACH Resource Centers on Independent Living – Dallas, Fort Worth and Denton, Corpus Christi Committee for Persons with Disabilities, Goodwill of Central Texas and Coastal Bend Center for Independent Living