Louisiana State Report 2020

By Terry Lafleur, VOR Secretary & Louisiana Co-State Coordinator

Governor John Bel Edwards was re-elected and is still very supportive of our state run facility, Pinecrest Supports & Services. Louisiana now has a 2 nd state run facility, Louisiana Special Education Center, in Alexandria which was moved from the State Education budget to Department of Health budget in January.

Like every state, Louisiana is feeling the impact of the Covid-19 virus.

In early March, parents were told we would not be able to visit our kids until the state lifts the stay at home rule. Louisiana will be in Phase 1 of "re-opening" as of Friday May 15, but does not include visitation, so we still don't know when we will be allowed.

Pinecrest started testing employees and residents very early in this pandemic. Tents were set up at the entrance and any employee who had symptoms were not allowed to enter our facility. Residents who tested positive for the virus were isolated immediately, at this time all are re-covering and some are back in their homes.

One major concern about Louisiana budget; because oil prices have fallen sharply the projected revenue for the state is just not there.

The Legislative session which was to start in March was postponed until May 4 so at this time we don't know what impact these budget shortfalls will have on the Department of Health budget nor our facilities. In the words of a legislator--- THIS IS A MESS !