

MINUTES

**MONTANA SENATE
59th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION**

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON MENTAL HEALTH

Call to Order: By **VICE CHAIR EVE FRANKLIN**, on March 29, 2005 at 5:00 P.M., in Room 422 Capitol.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Sen. John Esp (R)
Rep. Eve Franklin (D)
Rep. Gordon R. Hendrick (R)

Members Excused: Sen. Dan Weinberg, Chairman (D)

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Annie Glover, Committee Secretary
Susan Fox, Legislative Branch

Please Note. These are summary minutes. Testimony and discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

Committee Business Summary:

Hearing & Date Posted: None.
Executive Action: None.

Ms. Joan Daly, Director, Mental Health Services, Billings Deaconess Clinic, explained how difficult it was to provide mental health services in eastern Montana because of the geographic distribution and size of towns in the area. Billings is the primary medical center for the eastern part of the state and ends up providing services to towns well beyond easy reach of the hospital. As a result mental health services do not always reach the people they are intended for.

EXHIBIT (jms66a01)

Mr. Bob Frost, Regional Consultant, Montana Region, St. Vincent Hospital, underscored the necessity for outreach services in eastern Montana because clients there are being underserved.

Mr. Dan Anderson, Chairman, Helena Mental Health Local Advisory Council, made the point that there is no psychiatric hospitalization available in the immediate Helena area and that clients here need to go to Butte or Great Falls for serious care.

Former Senator Mignon Waterman, Helena Mental Health Local Advisory Council, detailed the many services that need to be available to clients in the immediate Helena area. Those same services need to be provided to other underserved areas in Montana.

Ms. Bonnie Adee, Mental Health Ombudsman, advocates for mental health clients throughout Montana and detailed the difficulties of serving such a large area with such diverse needs.

Dr. Donald Harr, Psychiatrist, indicated how hard it is for physicians with limited time and support services available to them to serve the mental health community in Montana.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 6:00 P.M.

SEN. DAN WEINBERG, Chairman

ANNIE GLOVER, Secretary

KATHLEEN ELY, Transcriber

DW/ag/ke

Additional Exhibits:

EXHIBIT ([jms66aad0.PDF](#))