

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 27

INTRODUCED BY D. WEINBERG

BY REQUEST OF THE SENATE FINANCE AND CLAIMS STANDING COMMITTEE

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING THAT AN INTERIM COMMITTEE STUDY MENTAL HEALTH FUNDING MECHANISMS BETWEEN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND THE STATE OF MONTANA, TO IMPROVE FUNDING EFFICIENCIES FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENHANCING MONTANA'S MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM AND BUILDING AN INTEGRATED, COMPREHENSIVE PUBLIC MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM IN MONTANA .

WHEREAS, the mental health of Montanans is essential to their overall health; and

WHEREAS, the State of Montana strives to provide a comprehensive system that delivers public mental health services in an efficient and cost-effective manner that ensures timely access to services that promote recovery; and

WHEREAS, the state endeavors to integrate mental health services throughout the various divisions of the Department of Public Health and Human Services and all other state agencies and to offer state services with consideration to services provided by local governments, tribal governments, and the general health care system; and

WHEREAS, a continuous dialogue between the Legislature, the Department of Public Health and Human Services, the Department of Corrections, other state agencies, local governments, community mental health service providers, consumers of mental health services and their families, mental health advocates, and all other interested persons is vital to developing an understanding of mental health services in Montana and the need to transform those services into an integrated, comprehensive public mental health system; and

WHEREAS, the goals and recommendations of the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health provide a framework for transforming mental health care in Montana into a system that focuses on recovery and is one in which: Montanans understand that mental health is essential to overall health; mental health care is consumer-driven and family-driven; disparities in mental health services are reduced; early mental health screening, assessment, and referral to services occur; excellent mental health care is delivered, and research is accelerated; and technology is used to access mental health care and information; and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the Legislature to provide leadership in ensuring a future in which every person in Montana with a mental illness at any stage of life has timely access to effective treatment with

objectively measurable outcomes and the support services essential for living, working, learning, and participating fully in the community; and

WHEREAS, the federal government and the State of Montana are partners in funding mental health services within Montana.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

That the Legislative Council be requested to designate an appropriate interim committee, pursuant to section 5-5-217, MCA, or direct sufficient staff resources to evaluate the public mental health services available to Montanans in order to transform those services into a comprehensive, statewide public mental health system that:

- (1) fosters collaboration between federal, state, local, and private agencies that have a mental health component;
- (2) provides an integrated continuum of mental health services and associated support services;
- (3) focuses on achieving objectively measurable treatment outcomes; and
- (4) effectively blends resources to maximize efficiencies while ensuring appropriate, evidence-based practices that promote recovery.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that for the purpose of enhancing Montana's mental health system and building an integrated, comprehensive public mental health system in Montana, the study:

- (1) evaluate all funding mechanisms and efficiencies that may be possible between the federal government and the State of Montana and among the departments and bureaus of the State of Montana to determine how the state can maximize federal resources and funding opportunities;
- (2) in its evaluation of funding mechanisms and efficiencies, take into consideration the ways in which mental illness affects the lives of Montanans, including children with serious emotional disturbance. The study must consider these effects in areas including but not limited to employment, education, family integrity, community integration, and general health care.
- (3) consider new, innovative partnerships between public and private mental health services providers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the interim committee include in its discussions the following interested parties:

- (1) representatives of the Department of Public Health and Human Services, including representatives from the Addictive and Mental Disorders Division and the Children's Mental Health Bureau;

(2) representatives of the Department of Corrections who have responsibility for the provision of mental health services to criminal offenders;

(3) representatives of the Governor's Office, including representatives from the Mental Disabilities Board of Visitors and the Mental Health Ombudsman's Office;

(4) representatives from each of the three service area authorities provided for in section 53-21-1006, MCA, and from the local advisory councils and the Mental Health Oversight Advisory Council provided for in section 53-21-702, MCA;

(5) professional mental health service providers;

(6) private organizations involved in mental health issues; and

(7) consumers of mental health services and their families, as well as advocates for persons with mental illnesses and members of the public.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the committee use the money appropriated in House Bill No. 818 as needed for the study, including but not limited to contracting for research and analysis of federal funding mechanisms and other matters that will provide information necessary for completion of the study.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that if the study is assigned to staff, any findings or conclusions be presented to and reviewed by an appropriate committee designated by the Legislative Council.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including presentation and review requirements, be concluded prior to September 15, 2008.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions, comments, or recommendations of the appropriate committee, be reported to the 61st Legislature.

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