
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 293 Session of
2001

INTRODUCED BY NAILOR, VANCE, GABIG, EGOLF, ARMSTRONG, CAPPELLI,
MANN, DALEY, RUBLEY, GEORGE, SANTONI, GRUCELA, TIGUE,
RAYMOND, BISHOP, LAUGHLIN, CREIGHTON, WATSON, PETRONE,
M. BAKER, BELFANTI, BEBKO-JONES, DeWEESE, MACKERETH, DAILEY,
E. Z. TAYLOR, JAMES, SATHER, J. EVANS, SOLOBAY, STABACK,
B. SMITH, CAWLEY, BENNINGHOFF, MELIO, MARSICO, S. MILLER,
MANDERINO, STERN, SCRIMENTI, DeLUCA, GEIST, WALKO, BARRAR,
R. MILLER, KENNEY, READSHAW, PIPPY, HARHAI, CURRY, COLAFELLA,
T. STEVENSON, PETRARCA, ROBINSON, YOUNGBLOOD, STURLA,
BASTIAN, CLYMER, SAINATO, C. WILLIAMS, FRANKEL, BROWNE,
THOMAS, ZUG, SAYLOR, TULLI AND WATERS, SEPTEMBER 26, 2001

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON RULES, SEPTEMBER 26, 2001

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Joint State Government Commission to establish a
2 task force to study the availability and accessibility of
3 intensive and appropriate community services and supports for
4 persons with serious mental illness, addictive disorders and
5 co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse disorders; to
6 determine the individual and community consequences of
7 leaving untreated and undertreating such illnesses and
8 disorders and the relationship to incarceration and
9 homelessness; to determine the gaps in private insurance
10 coverage and public funding of services for individuals
11 suffering from such illnesses and disorders; and to make
12 recommendations on addressing these gaps and meeting
13 individual needs while respecting individual rights and
14 dignity.

15 WHEREAS, Many incidents of crime in the community are
16 attributed to persons with untreated serious mental illnesses
17 and addictive disease; and

18 WHEREAS, Approximately 3% of the 35,000 people incarcerated
19 in Pennsylvania's State correctional institutions suffer from

1 serious mental illness, 15% suffer from co-occurring mental
2 illness and substance abuse disorders, and 90% of those people
3 incarcerated have addictive disorders; and

4 WHEREAS, Five percent of persons who have serious mental
5 illness are homeless, and a high percentage of the single adult
6 homeless population suffers from addictive disorders or co-
7 occurring mental illness and substance abuse disorders; and

8 WHEREAS, Support of family and friends, quality of treatment,
9 financial resources and State support are necessary for
10 Pennsylvania's citizens with serious mental illnesses, addictive
11 disorders and co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse
12 disorders; and

13 WHEREAS, The availability, accessibility and quality of
14 community services are often variable and difficult for persons
15 with serious mental illness, addictive disorders or co-occurring
16 disorders to obtain and maintain; and

17 WHEREAS, Individuals with untreated or undertreated serious
18 mental illness, addictive disorders or co-occurring mental
19 illness and substance abuse disorders seek help but often may
20 not receive adequate treatment due to lack of private insurance
21 coverage, limited coverage or limited public funding for
22 services; and

23 WHEREAS, Individuals with untreated or undertreated serious
24 mental illness, addictive disorders or co-occurring mental
25 illness and substance abuse disorders are likely to become
26 homeless or become subject to the custody of the criminal
27 justice system without getting well; therefore be it

28 RESOLVED (The Senate concurring), That the General Assembly
29 direct the Joint State Government Commission to establish a task
30 force of four members of the Senate and four members of the

1 House of Representatives to undertake a study of the delivery
2 system of behavioral health services in this Commonwealth to
3 ascertain whether it is meeting the needs of individuals with
4 serious mental illness, addictive disease or co-occurring mental
5 illness and substance abuse disorders and their families and if
6 it is not meeting those needs to recommend appropriate
7 corrective measures such as addressing housing needs and
8 providing psychosocial rehabilitation services and continuous
9 treatment teams; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That the President pro tempore of the Senate, the
11 Minority Leader of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of
12 Representatives and the Minority Leader of the House of
13 Representatives each appoint two members to the task force; and
14 be it further

15 RESOLVED, That the task force be authorized to create an
16 advisory committee to assist the task force, to include
17 representatives from the Department of Public Welfare through
18 its Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Programs, the
19 Department of Health through its Bureau of Drug and Alcohol
20 Programs, the Department of Corrections and individuals
21 representing community mental health providers and consumers.
22 The advisory committee shall include individuals developing a
23 white paper for the Department of Public Welfare addressing co-
24 occurring addictions; and be it further

25 RESOLVED, That the initial area of task force review be the
26 availability and accessibility of intensive and appropriate
27 community services and supports for persons with severe mental
28 illness, addictive disorders and co-occurring mental illness and
29 substance abuse disorders and their families; and be it further

30 RESOLVED, That the task force study the individual, the

1 family and the community consequences of untreated and
2 undertreated serious mental illness, addictive disorders and co-
3 occurring mental illness and substance abuse disorders and the
4 relationship to homelessness and incarceration on individuals,
5 their families and the community; and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That the task force report its findings and
7 recommendations to the General Assembly as soon as possible.