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MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 7, 2012
TO: All House Members
FROM: Representative David Millard *DKM*
SUBJECT: Legislation – Amendment to the Mental Health Procedures Act

In the near future, I plan to introduce legislation that amends Section 304 of the Mental Health Procedures Act to provide for certified registered nurse practitioners (CRNP).

Certified Registered Nurse Practitioners are utilized at State Hospitals to provide for the psychiatric health of residents including history, physicals assessments, reassessments, order medications, direct treatment teams and interact with patients in therapeutic relationships.

Section 304 of the Mental Health Procedures Act provides for the process to continue or terminate involuntary commitment for individuals already in treatment. The provider must document the results of the examination, treatment needed and formulate an opinion on whether the patient is in need of continued involuntary treatment or no longer needs treatment. Section 304 requires documentation of this process by the examining physician.

CRNPs are responsible for carrying out these functions on the psychiatric units, but are unable under the current law to complete the documentation required under the law.

The intent of this legislation is to allow a Certified Registered Nurse Practitioner, acting within the scope of practice, to complete documentation required under Section 304.

With the shortage of psychiatrists in certain areas of the state, this legislation will ease this burden by expanding the authorization under the law to another qualified class of professionals and allowing certified registered nurse professionals to act within their full scope of practice.

If you wish to sponsor this legislation please contact Denise Murray at 783-1102 or dmurray@pahousegop.com.