

AMENDMENTS TO LR 39

Introduced by Health and Human Services

1 1. Strike the original resolution and insert:

2 WHEREAS, the Legislature regards access to mental health
3 and substance abuse treatment to be of paramount importance to the
4 citizens of our state; and

5 WHEREAS, President George W. Bush's proposed budget
6 for the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2008 includes
7 significantly decreased appropriations to a number of programs
8 that are critical in providing services to citizens with mental
9 illness and substance abuse disorders; and

10 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that individuals
11 experiencing problems associated with mental health and substance
12 abuse are having difficulty accessing appropriate services in a
13 timely manner. This is evidenced by extensive wait lists for
14 individuals requiring mental health and substance abuse services
15 in the community. Currently, over one thousand people are on wait
16 lists for such services in Nebraska; and

17 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that delays in accessing
18 mental health and substance abuse services can exacerbate
19 conditions for those consumers needing such professional
20 intervention. Wait lists and access delays demonstrate an
21 inadequate capacity for behavioral treatment services in Nebraska
22 to sufficiently and timely meet consumer need in both rural and
23 urban settings; and

1 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that insurance companies
2 are increasingly limiting their liability for claims for mental
3 health and substance abuse services. The diminishing availability
4 for mental health and substance abuse treatment resources for the
5 insured population has impacted public resources. An increasing
6 number of consumers are forced to access the public behavioral
7 health system to meet mental health and substance abuse needs; and

8 WHEREAS, the Legislature considers federal funding for
9 mental health and substance abuse treatment to be critical in
10 providing an appropriate level of access to proper treatment for
11 citizens; and

12 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that a decrease in federal
13 funding for mental health and substance abuse treatment will
14 provide substantive harm to a vulnerable population and will
15 negatively impact the quality of life for our citizens.

16 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE ONE
17 HUNDREDTH LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA, FIRST SESSION:

18 1. That the Legislature urges the members of Nebraska's
19 congressional delegation to ensure that Congress fully fund mental
20 health and substance abuse treatment.

21 2. That the Legislature urges the Governor to use his
22 best efforts to work with the Nebraska congressional delegation to
23 ensure that this funding is restored.

24 3. That the Governor and each member of Nebraska's
25 congressional delegation receive a copy of this resolution.