

By: Walle

H.R. No. 1248

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, The Houston Police Department formed a Mental Health  
2 Unit in 2007 to develop, implement, and manage the department's  
3 multifaceted specialized response strategies for individuals in  
4 serious mental health crises; and

5           WHEREAS, The Mental Health Unit is now a state and national  
6 model, having trained the first group of Crisis Intervention Team  
7 officers in the San Antonio and Austin Police Departments, as well  
8 as numerous law enforcement officers and mental health  
9 professionals across the state and nation; and

10           WHEREAS, In 2010, Houston became one of six police  
11 departments nationally to be designated as a Learning Site by the  
12 United States Council of State Governments; as such, the department  
13 provides crisis intervention training and educational materials to  
14 law enforcement officers and mental health personnel from across  
15 the country and hosts site visits for them to learn about its  
16 programs; and

17           WHEREAS, The Mental Health Unit has collaborated with  
18 criminal justice, mental health, and advocacy organizations in  
19 Houston and throughout Harris County to develop a number of  
20 state-of-the-art programs; among them are the Crisis Intervention  
21 Response Team, which pairs a Houston Mental Health Peace Officer  
22 with a licensed professional counselor from the Mental Health  
23 Mental Retardation Authority of Harris County to provide a highly  
24 specialized response to individuals in the most serious mental

1 health crises, and the Chronic Consumer Stabilization Initiative, a  
2 proactive program to keep chronic consumers out of crisis with  
3 intensive case management; this initiative, which has reduced the  
4 number of calls-for-service to individuals on its caseload by as  
5 much as 70 percent, was recognized with the prestigious 2010  
6 International Association of Chiefs of Police Community Policing  
7 Award and was a finalist for the Herman Goldstein Award for  
8 Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing; and

9       WHEREAS, In 2011, the Mental Health Unit implemented a  
10 Homeless Outreach Team with the mission of improving the lives of  
11 homeless Houstonians and reducing their numbers by helping them  
12 overcome the barriers that keep them homeless; during its first two  
13 years, the Homeless Outreach Team found housing for more than 200  
14 homeless individuals and referred over 1,000 individuals to local  
15 service providers, thereby connecting them with physical and mental  
16 health care; and

17       WHEREAS, In addition to these endeavors, the City of Houston  
18 collaborated with community organizations to open the Houston  
19 Center for Sobriety, a facility closely aligned with the Houston  
20 Police Department's Mental Health Unit, and the unit's manager,  
21 Lieutenant Mike Lee, was instrumental in its design, development,  
22 and implementation; the center serves as an alternative to jail for  
23 people who are publicly intoxicated, as they can remain in the  
24 facility until sober; they are subsequently counseled for alcohol  
25 and substance abuse problems and provided with referral information  
26 for follow-up counseling and treatment; and

27       WHEREAS, Under the leadership of Chief of Police Charles

1 A. McClelland, Jr., Executive Assistant Chief Timothy  
2 N. Oettmeier, and Mental Health Unit Manager Lieutenant Michael  
3 A. Lee, the Houston Police Department's Mental Health Unit  
4 continues to exemplify excellence and innovation through  
5 collaboration and commitment; now, therefore, be it

6       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 83rd Texas  
7 Legislature hereby commend the Houston Police Department's Mental  
8 Health Unit for its service to the community, mental health  
9 professionals, and the criminal justice system and extend to all  
10 those associated with the unit sincere best wishes for continued  
11 success; and, be it further

12       RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
13 prepared for the unit as an expression of high regard by the Texas  
14 House of Representatives.