

By: Clardy

H.C.R. No. 81

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, National Mental Health Month is observed each May to
2 raise awareness about mental illness and related issues in the
3 United States; and

4 WHEREAS, Good mental health is essential to one's overall
5 health and well-being, but each year one in five adults, of any age,
6 gender, race, ethnicity, religion, and economic status, face mental
7 health issues; and

8 WHEREAS, Studies have shown that about a third of all people
9 experiencing mental illnesses and about half of the people living
10 with severe mental illnesses also confront or battle against
11 substance abuse, and about a third of all alcohol abusers and more
12 than half of all drug abusers report experiencing a mental illness;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, People with mental illness can achieve recovery and
15 wellness when appropriate mental health services and support are
16 available; cognitive behavioral therapy is particularly effective
17 in helping people with dual diagnoses learn to cope and to change
18 ineffective patterns of thinking, and involving families through
19 psychoeducation is an important component of successful mental
20 health and substance abuse treatment; moreover, publication of a
21 diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders has vastly
22 increased innovation in psychiatric treatment and clarified
23 diagnosis in a wide range of practice settings, and current
24 treatment is now more objective, consistent, and effective than

1 treatment in the past; and

2 WHEREAS, Recovery does not happen in isolation, however; it
3 requires a sufficient number of licensed health care providers,
4 including psychologists, marriage and family therapists, licensed
5 professional counselors, social workers, and psychiatrists, who
6 use their training and clinical skills to diagnose and treat
7 patients; and

8 WHEREAS, "The Mental Health Workforce Shortage in Texas"
9 report identifies the lack of mental health professionals and
10 primary care practitioners in rural communities, and this shortage
11 results in greater difficulty in developing the multidisciplinary,
12 integrated service that would be optimal for people with comorbid
13 conditions; and

14 WHEREAS, As of March 2009, more than two-thirds of Texas' 254
15 counties were designated as Health Professional Shortage Areas for
16 mental health; state agencies and community health care
17 organizations report extensive problems in recruiting and training
18 psychologists, marriage and family therapists, licensed
19 professional counselors, social workers, and psychiatrists, and it
20 is estimated that only 39 percent of persons with mental illness and
21 11 percent of persons with substance abuse issues receive needed
22 treatment; and

23 WHEREAS, The economic value of providing appropriate and
24 timely access to mental health services can be measured beyond
25 individual patient benefits to include cost savings to state and
26 local hospitals and reduced expenditures by state agencies and
27 programs, including the criminal and juvenile justice systems,

1 children and family services, housing, and employment; and

2 WHEREAS, Increased funding has been provided, but even with
3 these new funds, challenges remain to keep up with demand, to ensure
4 that the delivery system is strong, and to better integrate
5 behavioral health into the traditional health care system;
6 professional oversight, training, and clinical experience are all
7 essential to the effectiveness of mental health licensees, and
8 their success is crucial to meeting the ongoing challenges facing
9 the efficient delivery of quality mental health services; now,
10 therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, That the 85th Legislature of the State of Texas
12 hereby commend mental health professionals for their invaluable
13 contributions to the citizens of this state and extend to them
14 sincere best wishes for success with their important work.