

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Submitted to the Committee on Higher Education
For HB 15

Compiled on: Monday, March 20, 2023 3:46 PM

Note: Comments received by the committee reflect only the view of the individual(s) submitting the comment, who retain sole responsibility for the content of the comment. Neither the committee nor the Texas House of Representatives takes a position on the views expressed in any comment. The committee compiles the comments received for informational purposes only and does not exercise any editorial control over comments.

Hearing Date: March 20, 2023 10:00 AM

Thomas Taylor
Self
Dallas, TX

The State of Texas owes its citizens for the Legislature to support this bill and the accompanying HJR 135. Brain health and brain diseases should be the major focus of the Legislature and Governor, and these pieces of legislation create the Brain Health and Disease Research Institute of Texas. **PASS THIS BILL AND JOINT RESOLUTION.** Let the voters decide in November whether a state agency created solely for research is a priority in this state! Thomas Taylor

Sylvia Campbell
self, retired
The Woodlands, TX

To the Members of the Higher Education Committee,
I am writing in support of HB 15 and HJR 135, because I believe mental health is one of the most pressing issues of our time. Texas is already established as a major center for health research, and this will enhance the work of this new institute. I believe lives depend upon this long term investment.
Thank you,
Sylvia Campbell

Laura Weaver
self/retired
The Woodlands, TX

Please support HB 15. There is much research to be done on the prevention and treatment of brain-related diseases. Let's make Texas the hub of medical progress in brain health. The Mental Health and Brain Research Institute of Texas has the potential to attract researchers, grant money and put Texas in the forefront of this important work.

Penny Bradshaw, N/A

Retired

Spring, TX

To all members of the House Higher Education Committee:

I am writing IN SUPPORT OF HB 15 and HJR 135 (author Thompson, co-authors Craddick and Buckley) which would create the Mental Health and Brain Research Institute of Texas and expedite innovation in mental health and brain research to improve the health of residents of this state. House Joint Resolution 135 will send House Bill 15 (if passed) to the voters as a constitutional amendment.

Thank you,

Penny Bradshaw

Mary Branson

Self- retired Marriage and Family Therapist

The Woodlands, TX

I enthusiastically support this bill. Texas needs to take steps to ensure the mental health and emotional well being of its residents, and this would be a start.

Markiesha Harewood

Self

Cedar Park, TX

Good morning,

As a person living with Multiple Sclerosis in addition to other issues, I am am hoping this bill will pass. My academic career was sidelined due to my situation but I could have benefited from more information or case studies being available. I was not aware of having MS which left me at times confused, alone, and certainly trying to figure out what was wrong. Having an Institute that would focus on the brain and disorders along with potential mental health effects would be great. I cannot say I would have changed my studies but the thought of young students having this great resource makes me hopeful.

Thanks for your consideration,

MH

Simone Nichols-Segers
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
Austin, TX

Dear Chair Kuempel, Vice Chair Paul and Committee Members,

On behalf of the National MS Society, thank you for the opportunity to express our strong support for HB 15. We hope the creation of the Mental Health and Brain Institute of Texas will help to drive the development of new solutions for people with brain-related diseases, including multiple sclerosis (MS). We are grateful to Chair Thompson for filing this legislation. MS is an unpredictable, often disabling disease of the central nervous system that disrupts the flow of information within the brain, and between the brain and body. Symptoms range from numbness and tingling to blindness and paralysis, but the progress, severity and specific symptoms of MS in any one person cannot yet be predicted. Most people with MS are diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 50. There currently is no cure, but research investment is driving the solutions that bring us closer to a world free of MS.

Nearly one million Americans live with MS in the United States. The National MS Society is active at the Congressional level in advocating for federal research investment for MS and other illnesses, which has resulted in innovative and impactful research that addresses fundamental issues and gaps in MS diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation. We view research as a public-private partnership and our organization has invested more than \$1.06 billion in MS research funding to date. We serve as a strategic partner with federal, academic and private research partners to identify gaps, reduce unnecessary duplication and leverage complementary research efforts.

The National MS Society is supportive of the goals of the program to increase general knowledge and understanding of neurological and brain-related diseases, improve diagnosis and care, and help find cures. If you have any questions or would like more information, my email is simone.nichols-segers@nmss.org or call me at 512.340.2707.

Thank you for your time and service to the state of Texas.

Sincerely,

Simone Nichols-Segers
Associate Vice President, Advocacy and Policy
National MS Society