

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 61

BY SENATOR BARROW

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health and Louisiana commercial health insurance payors to increase reimbursement rates for behavioral health crisis centers operating under a crisis receiving center license.

WHEREAS, the Louisiana crisis response system was established in 2022 as a statewide mental health crisis response system aligned with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) guidelines; and

WHEREAS, the goals of the Louisiana crisis response system are to support individuals with mental illness that had been living in nursing facilities transition back into the community, reduce emergency room utilization, and decrease law enforcement and justice system involvement in the care of individuals with mental illness; and

WHEREAS, the office of behavioral health included in its final design for the crisis system of care four key services, including mobile crisis response, community brief crisis support, behavioral health crisis centers, and crisis stabilization; and

WHEREAS, behavioral health crisis centers are walk-in facilities that offer short-term crisis intervention services, which includes twenty-three hour care designed to stabilize individuals in crisis; and

WHEREAS, under the Louisiana Department of Health's licensing framework, behavioral health crisis centers may obtain either a behavioral health service provider license or a crisis receiving center license; and

WHEREAS, facilities licensed as crisis receiving centers are the only facilities authorized and staffed to offer both short-term, twenty-three hour crisis stabilization services and long-term, three to seven day crisis care at the same location for individuals requiring further stabilization; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Medicaid fee schedule has distinct reimbursement rates for behavioral health crisis care performed with a behavioral health service license versus a crisis receiving center license with different levels of staffing required; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid reimbursement rates for behavioral health crisis care

providers operating under a crisis receiving center license are inadequate to cover the cost of twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week staffing required by the Louisiana Department of Health, and the additional staffing required to care for higher acuity patients served by behavioral health crisis care providers and crisis receiving centers; and

WHEREAS, an independent, third-party rate analysis shows the total per diem cost for a licensed behavioral health crisis care provider operating a crisis receiving center is \$1,163 to provide the first twenty-three hours of care in compliance with state and federal regulatory staffing requirements, which includes costs for clinicians, nurses, licensed prescribers, peer support specialists, and behavioral health technicians; and

WHEREAS, the current Louisiana Medicaid per diem reimbursement rate for a licensed behavioral health crisis care provider operating a crisis receiving center is \$549.40; and

WHEREAS, as a result of inadequate Medicaid reimbursement rates for a licensed behavioral health crisis care provider operating a crisis receiving center, there is currently only one provider of this type throughout Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, other crisis receiving centers have attempted to open in other regions of the state, but have been unable to open or remain viable due to inadequate Medicaid and commercial insurance reimbursement rates.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health and Louisiana commercial health insurance payors to increase reimbursement rates to more accurately reflect the cost of providing crisis stabilization services at behavioral health crisis centers operating under a crisis receiving center license.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health and the executive director of the Louisiana Association of Health Plans.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES