

1 HB489
2 192196-1
3 By Representative Weaver
4 RFD: Health
5 First Read: 06-MAR-18

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8 SYNOPSIS: This bill would require the Alabama
9 Department of Mental Health to establish and
10 operate a statewide mental health crisis telephone
11 hotline to assist persons in mental health crises;
12 and would require 24-hour operation of the hotline,
13 seven days a week and every day of the year.

14
15 A BILL
16 TO BE ENTITLED
17 AN ACT

18
19 Relating to mental health; to require the Alabama
20 Department of Mental Health to establish and operate a
21 statewide mental health crisis telephone hotline, which would
22 assist persons in mental health crises; and to require 24-hour
23 operation of the hotline, seven days a week and every day of
24 the year.

25 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

26 Section 1. (a) The Department of Mental Health shall
27 establish and operate a statewide toll-free Mental Health

1 Crisis Hotline. The hotline shall be operated 24 hours a day,
2 seven days a week, and every day of the year.

3 (b) Mental Health Crisis Hotline telephone operators
4 shall assist callers by doing all of the following:

5 (1) Conducting a comprehensive evidence-based
6 screening for mental health needs.

7 (2) Conducting a risk assessment for callers who
8 indicate a likelihood of committing suicide or a homicide, and
9 connecting callers to an emergency response system when a risk
10 is indicated.

11 (3) Referring callers for ongoing care.

12 (4) Following up with callers to determine if their
13 needs were met.

14 (c) The department shall collect and maintain the
15 following information to provide to callers on the Mental
16 Health Crisis Hotline:

17 (1) The names, telephone numbers, and addresses of:

18 a. Residential, inpatient, and outpatient mental
19 health programs and facilities, including information on
20 private programs and programs administered by local health
21 departments and other public entities in the caller's area.

22 b. Hospitals, including hospital emergency rooms in
23 the caller's area.

24 (2) The levels of care provided by the programs,
25 hospitals, and facilities identified under subdivision (1) of
26 this subsection.

1 (3) Whether the programs, hospitals, and facilities
2 identified under subdivision (1) of this subsection do the
3 following:

4 a. Accept payment for services from a third-party
5 payor, including Medicare, Medicaid, and private insurance.

6 b. Provide services that:

7 1. Are specific to pregnant women.

8 2. Are gender specific.

9 3. Support parents of children with mental health
10 disorders.

11 4. Offer grief support.

12 (d) (1) The department shall provide training for
13 Mental Health Crisis Hotline staff who assist callers on the
14 Mental Health Crisis Hotline to ensure that staff are able to
15 provide sufficient information and respond appropriately to
16 callers who may be in a crisis.

17 (2) To the extent practicable, the department shall
18 ensure that information provided to callers on the Mental
19 Health Crisis Hotline is up to date and accurate.

20 (e) The department shall disseminate information
21 about the Mental Health Crisis Hotline to the public, both
22 directly and through public and private organizations that
23 serve the public.

24 Section 2. This act shall become effective on the
25 first day of the third month following its passage and
26 approval by the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.