

1 SJR34
2 205557-1
3 By Senators Gudger, Butler, Allen, Givhan, Melson, Sessions,
4 Price, Chambliss, Albritton, Barfoot, Beasley, Burkette,
5 Chesteen, Coleman-Madison, Dunn, Elliott, Figures, Holley,
6 Jones, Livingston, Marsh, McClendon, Orr, Reed, Roberts,
7 Sanders-Fortier, Scofield, Shelnut, Singleton, Smitherman,
8 Stutts, Waggoner, Ward, Whatley and Williams
9 RFD:
10 First Read: 27-FEB-20

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8 ESTABLISHING CRISIS DIVERSION CENTERS TO PROVIDE
9 BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CRISIS SERVICES FOR ALABAMA RESIDENTS.
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11 WHEREAS, in Alabama, the suicide rate has outpaced
12 the national average every year since 1990, suicide is the
13 third leading cause of death for people aged 10 to 24 years
14 old, and veteran deaths by suicide ranked second among the 50
15 states; and

16 WHEREAS, individuals suffering from mental health
17 crises often ultimately need emergency medical care or find
18 themselves in the criminal justice system; and

19 WHEREAS, behavioral health crisis services have
20 emerged as effective tools to improve the lives of people
21 struggling with mental health or substance abuse issues; and

22 WHEREAS, there are currently no crisis diversion
23 centers located within Alabama; and

24 WHEREAS, crisis diversion centers are regional hubs
25 where an individual can seek services at a physical location
26 on a 24-hour basis; and

1 WHEREAS, crisis diversion centers provide intensive
2 levels of care in a centralized location while also providing
3 for community-based resources that serve the needs of urban,
4 suburban, and rural communities in a cost-effective manner;
5 and

6 WHEREAS, crisis diversion centers typically include
7 both walk-in access for individuals, and also provide
8 emergency departments and law enforcement agencies with the
9 ability to transfer individuals to the center for crisis care,
10 and utilize several practices such as short-term admission,
11 medication management, case management, discharge planning,
12 and referrals to ongoing behavioral health care services; and

13 WHEREAS, the Legislature wishes to improve
14 behavioral health crisis care by utilizing crisis diversion
15 centers to expand and enhance access to mental health care
16 services, provide a range of tools to divert individuals from
17 emergency rooms and the criminal justice system, maximize a
18 limited behavioral health workforce, and improve the quality
19 of life for Alabama's families and communities; now therefore,

20 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
21 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That the first crisis diversion
22 centers in this state will be established in fiscal year 2021,
23 as they offer great flexibility to meet the unique needs of
24 individual communities, increase access to behavioral health
25 services, and are therefore an excellent alternative to more
26 costly care options such as hospitals.