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Legislative news

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March 30, 2021

2021-2022 Legislative Session

Legislative News is a publication prepared and distributed by the South Carolina Department of Mental Health (SCDMH) Office of Public Affairs to keep you informed of bills introduced in the General Assembly that may affect the Agency, mental health, healthcare issues, or state employee issues. In addition, we will provide budget information and pertinent general news from the General Assembly. You can also access the complete text of each bill listed by clicking the link at the end of each description, or visiting www.scstatehouse.gov and searching them by bill number.

This publication is also available on the SCDMH Internet and Intranet sites. If, at any time, you have questions or need more information about bills or other legislative issues, contact the Office of Public Affairs at (803) 898-8582 or tracy.lapointe@scdmh.org.

Senate Bills – click on the bill number for full text.

S 2 Behavioral and Public Health – Peeler, Malloy, McElveen, Hembree, Senn (Similar H 3766)

This bill would rename the Department of Health and Environmental Control the "Department of Behavioral and Public Health", make it a Cabinet agency, and transfer environmental responsibilities to the SC Departments of Agriculture and Natural Resources. The bill would abolish the SCDMH and SC Mental Health Commission, as well as the Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services, and instead establish a Division of Mental Health and a Division of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services within the Department of Behavioral and Public Health.

Introduced, read first time, and referred to Medical Affairs Committee, 1/12/21.

S 231 Student ID Card Suicide Prevention Act – Shealy, McLeod, Matthews (Similar H 3476)

This bill would require public schools and public and private institutions of higher learning to add the telephone number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline to student ID cards, as well as appropriate telephone and text numbers for other hotlines.

Introduced, read first time, and referred to Education Committee, 1/12/21.

S 259 Mental Health Transport – Kimpson

This bill relates to the custody and transport of individuals believed to have mental illness and requiring immediate care; it would require that state or local law enforcement officers who transport these patients be part of a "therapeutic transport unit" and have undergone mental health and Crisis Intervention Training. The bill further requires that the physician responsible for the individual's care notify a friend or relative of the patient that they may transport the patient to the indicated mental health facility, and that the friend/relative freely chooses to assume responsibility and liability for the transport. Finally, the bill would extend the time a patient may be held under the doctor's certification when safe transport is not possible due to disasters or other conditions.

Introduced, read first time, and referred to Medical Affairs Committee, 1/12/21.

S 659 Sexually Violent Predator Program – Shealy (Similar H 4086)

This bill would make several procedural and substantive changes to the "Sexually Violent Predator Act", including, among other things, defining who are qualified evaluators; changing timeframes for completing evaluations, and modifying procedural rules for requesting and participating in periodic evaluations and annual review hearings.

Introduced, read first time, and referred to Medical Affairs Committee, 3/11/21.

S 669 Mental Health Month – Alexander

This concurrent resolution would recognize the month of May 2021 as Mental Health Month in South Carolina to raise awareness and understanding about mental illness and the need for appropriate and accessible services for all individuals with mental illness.

Introduced, read first time, and referred to Medical Affairs Committee, 3/16/21.

S 671 Children's Advocacy Center Day – Shealy

This concurrent resolution would recognize Wednesday, April 7, 2021, as Children’s Advocacy Center Day in South Carolina in honor of the important work done to combat the significant problem of child maltreatment.

Introduced, read first time, and referred to Family and Veterans' Services Committee, 3/16/21.

House Bills – click on the bill number for full text.

H 3230 Telepsychiatry Reimbursement – Herbkersman, Hosey, and Caskey

This bill would require the SC Department of Health and Human Services to reimburse practitioners for mental health services provided via telehealth to patients enrolled in Medicaid.

Introduced, read first time, and referred to Ways and Means Committee, 1/12/21.

H 3773 Restoration Treatment – West, G.M. Smith, Weeks, White (Similar S 79)

This bill would extend the length of time certain individuals unfit to stand trial may be hospitalized from 60 to 180 days. It would also allow the SCDMH to provide restoration treatment in detention centers and on an outpatient basis, where appropriate.

Introduced, read first time, and referred to Medical, Military, Public and Municipal Affairs Committee, 1/28/21.

H 3888 Mental Health Study Committee – King, Bryant, Cobb-Hunter, Brawley

This joint resolution would create a study committee to examine the state of mental health of South Carolina residents, to make certain findings, and prepare a report for the General Assembly before January 1, 2022.

Introduced, read first time, and referred to Medical, Military, Public and Municipal Affairs Committee 2/11/21.

Budget Update

SCDMH presented its FY 2022 Budget Request to the Governor's Office/Executive Budget Office 10/28/2020, to the House Ways & Means Healthcare Subcommittee 1/27/2021, and to the Senate Finance Healthcare Subcommittee March 3, 2021.

*SCDMH revised its budget request to include Certification of State Match on January 27, 2021. The table below shows the revised budget request side-by-side with recommendations from the Governor's Office and the House Ways & Means Committee.

SCDMH FY22 BUDGET REQUEST	SCDMH Request*	Governor's Rec.	Ways & Means Rec.
RECURRING			
Forensic Services	\$3,698,874	-	-
Sexually Violent Predator Treatment Program	\$3,550,731	\$2,000,000	-
State Veterans Nursing Homes	\$16,037,336	\$5,000,000	-
TOTAL RECURRING	\$23,286,941	\$7,000,000	-
NON-RECURRING			
School Mental Health \$1,500 Signing Bonus	-	\$600,000	-
TOTAL NON-RECURRING	-	\$600,000	-
CAPITAL			
Certification of State Match (Additional VA Nursing Homes)	\$49,788,352	-	\$27,000,000
Coastal-Empire HVAC, Sprinkler System, Fire Alarm & Roof	\$1,600,000	-	-
Crafts-Farrow Campus Electrical Distribution System	\$1,200,000	-	-
Harris Hospital Renovations (Anti-ligature)	\$6,005,645	-	-
Gaffney Building Purchase & Renovations	\$985,000	-	-
Crafts-Farrow Grease Trap Interceptor	\$388,000	-	-
Campbell Nursing Home Refrigerator & Freezer Replacement	\$100,000	-	-
Waccamaw CMH HVAC, Sprinkler System, Fire Alarm & Roof	\$1,600,000	-	-
Crafts-Farrow Fisher Auditorium & Library Demolition	\$250,000	-	-
Bryan Chilled Water Loop Branch Line Replacement	\$500,000	-	-
Crafts-Farrow Water Booster Pump Generator	\$155,000	-	-
Morris Village Sidewalks and Drainage	\$245,000	-	-
Bryan Energy Center Drainage	\$150,000	-	-
Roddey Phased Water Piping Replacement	\$202,000	-	-
Pee Dee MHC Boiler and Chiller Replacement	\$600,000	-	-
Aiken-Barnwell MHC HVAC Replacement	\$350,000	-	-
Anderson-Oconee-Pickens MHC Construction	\$12,430,000	-	-
Catawba MHC Construction	\$12,430,000	-	-
Campbell Veterans Nursing Home Renovations	\$3,940,000	-	-
Roddey Nursing Home Floor Replacement	\$1,000,000	-	-
Morris Village Nursing Station Renovations	\$450,000	-	-
Morris Village Infirmary	\$750,000	-	-
TOTAL CAPITAL	\$95,118,997	-	\$27,000,000
GRAND TOTAL REQUEST	\$118,405,938	\$7,600,000	\$27,000,000
Transfer Alzheimer's Funding to Department on Aging	(\$778,706)	(\$778,706)	-
Other Funds Authorization	\$36,000,000	\$36,000,000	\$36,000,000