



Monroe County Legislature

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No. 060352
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Committee Assignment
Memorializing Referral -L

October 6, 2006

To the Honorable
Monroe County Legislature
407 County Office Building
39 West Main Street
Rochester, New York 14614

Re: Memorializing the New York State Assembly to Pass and Governor George E. Pataki to sign A12080, a Bill to Enact Timothy's Law Requiring That Insurers Provide Equal Coverage For Mental Health.

Honorable Legislators:

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, in any given year over twenty-five percent of American adults and ten percent of children suffer from a diagnosable mental disorder. Access to affordable mental health care can be critical for these individuals. When mental illness goes undiagnosed, or is not properly treated, the consequences can be devastating.

Currently, insurance providers in New York State are not required to cover treatment of mental health conditions and, as a result, not all insurance plans offer such coverage. Those that do, fail to provide coverage that is comparable to that offered for other health conditions. Individuals seeking treatment for mental illness often must pay larger deductibles, higher co-payments, and are subject to stricter limitations on the amount of inpatient and outpatient treatment they can receive.

In an effort to end this discrimination, state lawmakers have introduced legislation that aims to create equal coverage for mental illnesses as for other health conditions. Timothy's Law, as the legislation is known, would require insurance companies to fully cover biologically based mental illnesses and would require coverage of a broad range of mental health conditions that more commonly afflict children.

For too long, individuals suffering from mental illness have been subject to unfair treatment by insurers. Therefore, I urge you to join me in memorializing the New York State Assembly to pass and Governor Pataki to sign Timothy's Law, which will improve New Yorkers' access to affordable, quality mental health care.

Respectfully submitted,

 Carla M. Palumbo Democratic Leader	 Willie J. Lightfoot Legislator - District 27	 Harry B. Bronson Assistant Democratic Leader
 Calvin Lee, Jr. Assistant Democratic Leader	 Travis Heider Legislator - District 14	 Stephanie Polowe Aldersley Legislator - District 16
 Edward M. O'Brien Legislator - District 17	 Carrie M. Andrews Legislator - District 21	 C. Stephen Eckel Legislator - District 26
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