

04/06/2023

Senator Donna Bailey  
Representative Anne Perry  
Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services  
State House  
Augusta ME 04332

Re: LD 1304 Resolve, to Establish the Task Force to Study Barriers to Achieving Behavioral Health Integration and Parity

Dear Representative Perry and Senator Bailey, and Representatives Brennan, Dhalac, and Madigan:

As a **licensed psychologist** in Maine, I am writing in support of this critical emergency legislation to establish a task force to study service barriers to behavioral health treatment. At a time when there is a serious shortage of mental health providers across the state, on the heels of a national pandemic, we have an unprecedented shortage of BH services for every sector of the population, from school children to the elderly.

**My referral folder is typically about an inch thick, and since the pandemic, it has grown about half a foot. People are paying out of pocket for mental health services, yet their insurance companies utilize multiple roadblocks or simply refuse to reimburse them for the cost of their mental health treatment. This is crippling our Maine residents and simply must be addressed.**

I am asking for your support to develop this task force to identify the barriers that private and public insurance providers place on BH treatment services. Only by understanding these roadblocks in our insurance system can we improve access, encourage integration with primary care, and streamline our state's ability to provide BH treatment to people of all ages.

Respectfully submitted,



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