

MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(21)


TO: Honorable Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

DATE: January 23, 2013

FROM: R. A. Cuevas, Jr.
County Attorney

SUBJECT: Resolution urging the Florida
Legislature during the 2013
session to increase funding for
mental health programs

The accompanying resolution was prepared and placed on the agenda at the request of Prime Sponsor Commissioner Barbara J. Jordan.



R. A. Cuevas, Jr.
County Attorney

RAC/smm



MEMORANDUM
(Revised)

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and Members, Board of County Commissioners

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Please note any items checked.

- "3-Day Rule" for committees applicable if raised
- 6 weeks required between first reading and public hearing
- 4 weeks notification to municipal officials required prior to public hearing
- Decreases revenues or increases expenditures without balancing budget
- Budget required
- Statement of fiscal impact required
- Ordinance creating a new board requires detailed County Mayor's report for public hearing
- No committee review
- Applicable legislation requires more than a majority vote (i.e., 2/3's ____, 3/5's ____, unanimous ____) to approve
- Current information regarding funding source, index code and available balance, and available capacity (if debt is contemplated) required

Approved _____ Mayor

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(21)

Veto _____

1-23-13

Override _____

RESOLUTION NO. _____

RESOLUTION URGING THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE
DURING THE 2013 SESSION TO INCREASE FUNDING FOR
MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, on December 14, 2012, 20-year old Adam Lanza entered the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, shot and killed 26 innocent people, 20 of whom were elementary school-age children; and

WHEREAS, the mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School was the second-deadliest school shooting in U.S. history, after the 2007 Virginia Tech massacre; and

WHEREAS, Lanza, who also took his own life, had had a history of mental problems; and

WHEREAS, on Christmas night in Orlando, Florida, Jerry Tyson fatally stabbed Steven Lang with a butcher knife, when Lang, who was in a wheelchair, refused to hand over his pocket change to Tyson; and

WHEREAS, Tyson had a history of mental illness spanning 20 years; and

WHEREAS, the shootings at Sandy Hook, as well as incidents such as the stabbing in Orlando, are leading to a renewed focus on mental health as one means of preventing tragedies of this nature from happening in the future; and

WHEREAS, mental health advocates are urging lawmakers to commit more dollars to behavioral health services, stressing the need for additional counselors, mental health beds and school psychologists; and

WHEREAS, mental health providers typically experience a greater demand for mental health services during tough economic times; and

WHEREAS, the current economic downturn has been no exception to this trend, but most states nonetheless have substantially cut funding for mental health programs as one way to balance state budgets as revenues have declined; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors Research Institute estimates that states have cut at least \$4.35 billion in funding for mental health programs from fiscal years 2009 through 2012; and

WHEREAS, the Florida Legislature has cut tens of millions of dollars from mental health programs in the last several years, cutting \$12 million in mental health funding for the current year alone; and

WHEREAS, Florida currently ranks 48th among the 50 states in per capita funding for mental health, spending less than a third of the national average; and

WHEREAS, Texas and Idaho are the only states that spend less per capita on mental health services than Florida, according to the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors Research Institute; and

WHEREAS, Florida allocates only about one-third of the resources as the average state in the nation to work with people with severe and persistent mental illness; and

WHEREAS, Florida currently allocates only about \$39 per person to mental health programs, compared with the national average of \$120.56 per person; and

WHEREAS, the state that spends the most on mental health programs is Maine, which spends \$346 per person on mental health, almost ten times what Florida spends; and

WHEREAS, the National Alliance for Mental Illness gave Florida a grade of "D" in 2009, and this grade was before tens of millions more dollars were cut from mental health programs in Florida from fiscal years 2010 to 2012; and

WHEREAS, as the shooting at Sandy Hook and incidents like the stabbing in Orlando show, serious gaps in mental health care pose a threat to public safety; and

WHEREAS, the Florida Legislature should increase funding for mental health programs during the 2013 session,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, that this Board:

Section 1. Urges the Florida Legislature during the 2013 session to increase funding for mental health programs.

Section 2. Directs the Clerk of the Board to send a certified copy of this resolution to the Governor, Senate President, House Speaker and the Chair and Members of the Miami-Dade State Legislative Delegation.

Section 3. Directs the County's state lobbyists to advocate for the increased appropriations set forth in Section 1 above, and authorizes and directs the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs to amend the 2013 State Legislative Package to include this item.

The Prime Sponsor of the foregoing resolution is Commissioner Barbara J. Jordan.

It was offered by Commissioner _____, who moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner _____ and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

Rebeca Sosa, Chairwoman
Lynda Bell, Vice Chair

Bruno A. Barreiro
Jose "Pepe" Diaz
Sally A. Heyman
Jean Monestime
Sen. Javier D. Souto
Juan C. Zapata

Esteban L. Bovo, Jr.
Audrey M. Edmonson
Barbara J. Jordan
Dennis C. Moss
Xavier L. Suarez

The Chairperson thereupon declared the resolution duly passed and adopted this 23rd day of January, 2013. This resolution shall become effective ten (10) days after the date of its adoption unless vetoed by the Mayor, and if vetoed, shall become effective only upon an override by this Board.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA
BY ITS BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

HARVEY RUVIN, CLERK

By: _____
Deputy Clerk

Approved by County Attorney as
to form and legal sufficiency.



Jess M. McCarty

