

Substitute for House Resolution No. 257.

A resolution to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Community Mental Health Act by President John F. Kennedy.

Whereas, The Community Mental Health act laid the foundation for significant social change by allowing for the creation of community mental health centers, which drastically altered the delivery of mental health services across the United States; and

Whereas, The Community Mental Health Act symbolized a new era of delivering care to millions of Americans in need by ending isolation to institutions for those citizens struggling with developmental, intellectual, and mental health diagnoses; and

Whereas, President Kennedy ordered federal, state, and local organizations to focus on seeking out the cause of these illnesses to better work toward their elimination, to strengthen resources and knowledge of skilled people to support those in need, and to strengthen and improve programs and facilities serving these individuals; and

Whereas, This charge sparked action to allow individuals to live with proper support within their own communities; and

Whereas, In the years since the Community Mental Health Act was signed into law, the number of Americans with intellectual disabilities who live in large state-run institutions has declined by 85 percent. In fact, the State of Michigan's last institution for persons with developmental disabilities closed in 2009; and

Whereas, Michigan was one of the first states in the nation to begin the shift from institutionalization to community-based care; and

Whereas, Michigan now has 46 different community mental health services programs and hundreds of provider organizations that serve as gatekeepers of the public mental health system and provide assistance to residents in all 83 counties in our state. These organizations provide a comprehensive range of community-based mental health services that enhance quality of life, promote emotional well-being, and contribute to healthy and secure communities for all of Michigan's citizens; and

Whereas, Mental health must remain at the forefront of policy discussions among Michigan lawmakers; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the members of this legislative body commemorate the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Community Mental Health Act by President John F. Kennedy. We renew our commitment to improving mental healthcare access for the citizens of this state as we continue our work in the Michigan Legislature.