

House Bill 423

By: Representatives Gardner of the 57th, Buckner of the 130th, Oliver of the 83rd, Wilkinson of the 52nd, Lindsey of the 54th, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Code Section 31-5A-4 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the
2 powers, duties, functions, and responsibilities of the Department of Community Health, so
3 as to require mental health care coverage in any health benefits for members, employees, and
4 retirees of the Board of Regents through the Department of Community Health; to amend
5 Code Section 45-18-2 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the authority
6 of the Board of Community Health to establish a state employees' health insurance plan, so
7 as to require mental health care coverage; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting
8 laws; and for other purposes.

9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

10 **SECTION 1.**

11 Code Section 31-5A-4 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the powers,
12 duties, functions, and responsibilities of the Department of Community Health, is amended
13 by revising subsection (e) as follows:

14 "(e) The board of regents is authorized to contract with the department for health benefits
15 for members, employees, and retirees of the board of regents and the dependents of such
16 members, employees, and retirees and for the administration of such health benefits. The
17 department is also authorized to contract with the board of regents for such purposes. Any
18 health insurance benefits provided pursuant to this subsection shall include coverage for
19 mental disorders as defined by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders,
20 as in effect on July 1, 2007, on the same basis as physical illnesses and shall provide
21 comparable benefit levels for medications and services for the treatment of such mental
22 disorders."

SECTION 2.

Code Section 45-18-2 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the authority of the Board of Community Health to establish a state employees' health insurance plan, is amended by revising subsection (a) as follows:

"(a) The board is authorized to establish a health insurance plan for employees of the state and to adopt and promulgate rules and regulations for its administration, subject to the limitations contained in this article. The health insurance plan ~~may~~ shall provide for group hospitalization and surgical and medical insurance against the financial costs of hospitalization, surgery, and medical treatment and care and may also include, among other things, prescribed drugs, medicines, prosthetic appliances, hospital inpatient and outpatient service benefits, dental benefits, vision care benefits, and medical expense indemnity benefits, including major medical benefits. The health insurance plan established pursuant to this subsection shall include coverage for mental disorders as defined by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, as in effect on July 1, 2007, on the same basis as physical illnesses and shall provide comparable benefit levels for medications and services for the treatment of such mental disorders."

SECTION 3.

All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.