

House Resolution 685

By: Representatives Waites of the 60th, Thomas of the 56th, Scott of the 76th, and Stovall of the 74th

A RESOLUTION

1 Requesting the Congress of the United States to pass legislation restoring the deep cuts to
2 mental health services, research, special education, and supportive housing for children and
3 adults living with mental illness; and for other purposes.

4 WHEREAS, over the past few years, states have already cut more than \$2.2 billion from
5 public mental health services, which has compromised care and imposed tremendous costs
6 on emergency departments, law enforcement, jails, and shelters, not to mention the toll of
7 lost lives; and

8 WHEREAS, a report earlier this year from the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)
9 documented that \$1.6 billion has been cut from state mental health budgets during this
10 current economic downturn, and the costs of these cuts to state and local mental health care
11 system are devastating individuals, families, and our communities; and

12 WHEREAS, our state's mental health care budget crisis is everyone's problem, and its
13 solution is everyone's responsibility; we must protect and strengthen our state's mental health
14 care system; and

15 WHEREAS, the costs of untreated mental illness only gets shifted elsewhere — to
16 emergency departments, schools, police, courts, and overcrowded prisons; and

17 WHEREAS, federal cuts will only further erode vital treatment and supports for vulnerable
18 individuals living with serious mental illnesses; and

19 WHEREAS, a 70 percent cut to the HUD Section 811 program, a critical resource for
20 developing supportive housing for non-elderly adults living with disabilities, including
21 serious mental illness, must be rejected as the \$90.36 million for HUD Section 811 in HR 1
22 is not enough to keep in place existing operating subsidies and vouchers for current tenants
23 in 811 units; and

24 WHEREAS, an \$86 million reduction to the budget for the National Institute of Mental
25 Health (NIMH), a 7 percent reduction that would compromise continuation of a landmark
26 study on early intervention in schizophrenia, and a \$200 million cut to mental illness services
27 at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), a 5.5
28 percent reduction at a time when states are imposing deep cuts in public mental health
29 services, must also be vehemently opposed; and

30 WHEREAS, more people than ever are seeking public mental health care, and we call on
31 Congress to protect and strengthen mental health services in these challenging times.

32 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
33 the members of this body express their opposition to all funding cuts to mental health
34 services, research, special education, and supportive housing for children and adults living
35 with mental illness and request the Congress of the United States to pass legislation that
36 restores the deep funding cuts to mental health services.

37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
38 and directed to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to each
39 member of the Georgia congressional delegation and Governor Nathan Deal.