

The House Committee on Health offers the following substitute to HB 414:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 2 of Chapter 1 of Title 37 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
2 relating to powers and duties of the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental
3 Disabilities, so as to provide for a grant program to aid in the provision of behavioral health
4 services to service members, veterans, and their families; to provide for definitions; to
5 provide for program qualification requirements; to provide for rules and regulations; to
6 provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

8 **SECTION 1.**

9 Article 2 of Chapter 1 of Title 37 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
10 powers and duties of the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities,
11 is amended by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

12 "37-1-30.

13 (a) As used in this Code section, the term:

14 (1) 'Addictive disease' shall have the same meaning as set forth in Code Section 37-1-1.

15 (2) 'Behavioral health services' means services which are designed to prevent or
16 ameliorate the effects of mental illness or addictive disease.

17 (3) 'Eligible person' means a service member, veteran, or a family member of such
18 service member or veteran.

19 (4) 'Family member' means an individual with a close familial relationship, including,
20 but not limited to, a spouse, parent, child, stepchild, sibling, or grandparent.

21 (5) 'Mental illness' shall have the same meaning as set forth in Code Section 37-1-1.

22 (6) 'Program' means the Veterans Mental Health Services Program created pursuant to
23 subsection (b) of this Code section.

24 (7) 'Service member' means an active duty member of the regular or reserve component
25 of the United States armed forces, the United States Coast Guard, the Georgia National
26 Guard, or the Georgia Air National Guard on ordered federal duty for a period of 90 days
27 or longer.

28 (8) 'Veteran' means a person who is a former member of the United States armed forces,
29 the United States Coast Guard, the Georgia National Guard, or the Georgia Air National
30 Guard, regardless of their role or discharge status.

31 (b) The department shall create and administer a grant program, to be known as the
32 Veterans Mental Health Services Program, to aid in the provision of behavioral health
33 services through nonprofit community behavioral health programs to eligible persons.

34 (c) Subject to the availability of funding, the department shall award competitive matching
35 grants to establish and expand nonprofit community behavioral health programs that:

36 (1) Provide behavioral health services to eligible persons in the community;

37 (2) Utilize evidence based practices;

38 (3) Integrate military cultural competency training for program staff members; and

39 (4) Connect eligible persons to appropriate community based behavioral health services
40 in a timely manner on discharge from the nonprofit community behavioral health
41 program.

42 (d) The department, in implementing the Veterans Mental Health Services Program, shall
43 develop grant program qualification requirements for applicants, including, but not limited
44 to, the provision:

45 (1) That applicants must provide behavioral health services to service members, veterans,
46 and their families;

47 (2) Of priority status for program eligibility for locations within 50 miles of a military
48 base; and

49 (3) Of priority status for applicants seeking grants for operating costs attached to a
50 qualifying project for which capital investments have already been made.

51 (e) The department shall promulgate such other rules and regulations as necessary to
52 implement this Code section."

53 **SECTION 2.**

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