

HB 947 -- Mental Health Facilities and Group Homes

Sponsor: Walsh

This bill changes the laws regarding mental health facilities and group homes for the mentally retarded and developmentally disabled. In its main provisions, the bill:

- (1) Requires private mental health facilities and group homes for the mentally retarded and developmentally disabled to have the same requirements as state-operated facilities;
- (2) Adds private mental health facilities and group homes to the provisions regarding the Family Care Safety Registry and Sunshine Laws;
- (3) Expands the licensure and standards requirements for residential facilities and day programs to include private mental health facilities and group homes;
- (4) Requires the dismissal of private contractor employees who violate state laws and rules;
- (5) Requires facilities or homes to report staff turnover to the Department of Mental Health and the General Assembly;
- (6) Places a moratorium on patient transfers until the Family Care Safety Act is fully implemented; and
- (7) Requires the department to terminate contracts with private vendors having a pattern of abuse and neglect of patients and to submit a cost-benefit analysis and written plan prior to the closure or downsizing of any facility to the appropriations committees on mental health of the Senate and House of Representatives for their consideration.