

HB 171 -- MINORITY MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

SPONSOR: Washington

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Special Committee on Tourism by a vote of 7 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Administrative Oversight by a vote of 8 to 0.

This bill designates the month of July as "Minority Mental Health Awareness Month," and encourages citizens to observe the month with appropriate events and activities to raise awareness of the affects of mental illness on minorities.

This bill is the same as HB 1698 (2018).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that mental health does not discriminate, but mental health services often do. This bill is important to help minority populations acknowledge mental health issues and begin to erase the stigma associated with asking for help, and also to help everyone understand that services are not widely available to address the needs of this population.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Washington; Gena Terlizzi, National Alliance on Mental Illness; and Department of Mental Health.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.