



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 1723		DATE: 3/11/2024
COMMITTEE: Health and Mental Health Policy		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE C. "HONEST-ABE" DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVOCATE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: arniedienoff@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/11/2024 11:48 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

I am in Support of this Bill with the Substitute Amendment and Forming the Task Force to Report back the Findings to the General Assembly without making any changes to State Law at this time.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: CAROL MCMURRAN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: mcmurran@sbcglobal.net	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/10/2024 2:00 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

I think House Bill 1723 is important to the health of many Missourians and I urge you to vote in favor of it.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: CHRISTINA GESMUNDO SIMON		PHONE NUMBER: 314-898-3886	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: NAMI (NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS) ST. LOUIS		TITLE: PSYCHIATRIST AND NAMI ST. LOUIS ADVOCACY CHAIR	
ADDRESS: 14028 WETHERSFIELD TERRACE CT			
CITY: CHESTERFIELD		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63017
EMAIL: cgesmundo@hotmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/10/2024 4:57 PM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

Dear Health and Mental Health Policy Committee members, I am writing in support of House Bill 1723, asking you to vote yes at the time of committee action. As a Missourian and mental health advocate, House Bill 1723 is important to me because it makes life saving DBT treatment more accessible. Additionally, I believe in this bill because as a psychiatrist, I have seen patients benefit from DBT. I have seen DBT reduce cutting behaviors and suicidal behaviors. I have seen patients recover from substance use disorder as Borderline Personality Disorder using DBT skills. Please consider voting in support of House Bill 1723. Sincerely, Christina Gesmundo Simon, M.D. Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist Advocacy Committee Chair NAMI St. Louis



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ELIZABETH PETERSON		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:		SUBMIT DATE: 3/11/2024 12:00 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: EMILY RAPP		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: emilyrapp@sbcglobal.net	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/8/2024 4:41 PM

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We need proven approaches to fight the rise in mental illness for both adults and children. Investing in treatment is long term cost effective for the state



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: GARY T VOLK		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: gtvolk@swbell.net	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/11/2024 5:45 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Please vote yes on HB 1723, a bill that will save lives and save money for Missourians with behavioral health disorders.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: GLORIA SMITH		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: canterbury609@earthlink.net	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/9/2024 6:28 AM

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as the mother of a daughter who has been actively suicidal for most of her life, i support this bill. it is the only treatment recommended for the treatment of people who have persistent suicidal thoughts.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: HARRY SKORDOS		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 3/11/2024 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: JEFF BRENNEMAN		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:		SUBMIT DATE: 3/11/2024 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JOHN R. BLASER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: john.blaser@att.net	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/10/2024 5:40 PM

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please support this. DBT is accepted and the best therapy for these types of mental idleness



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KATHERINE KILO		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: kathyekilo@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/11/2024 8:23 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

Please vote yes on HB1723, a bill that will save lives and save money for Missourians with behavioral health disorders.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: KELLI UNNERSTALL		PHONE NUMBER: 314-422-7009	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: ASPIRE ADVOCATES FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH		TITLE: PRESIDENT	
ADDRESS: 14649 SUMMER BLOSSOM LN			
CITY: CHESTERFIELD		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63017
EMAIL: unnerstall@me.com	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 3/11/2024 8:50 AM	

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Dear Chairman Stephens and Committee members, My name is Kelli Unnerstall and I am here both as the founder of Aspire Advocates and as an individual whose life has been profoundly impacted by Dialectical Behavior Therapy. I am wearing green today in honor of mental health awareness and I'm asking you to support HB1723, as amended....a bill that will save lives and save money. Aspire is an organization whose mission is to improve the identification, treatment, and reimbursement of behavioral health services for children, teens, and young adults. We are a volunteer-led organization made up primarily of people with behavioral health conditions and the people that love them. All of us are eager to join forces with other stakeholders in our state to address barriers to receiving Dialectical Behavior Therapy, also known as DBT. HB1723, as amended, is simple...it establishes a Task Force to make recommendations that will address shortcomings as they relate to Dialectical Behavior Therapy. A few of the critical Task Force recommendations will include: • How to improve the availability and number of providers delivering comprehensive DBT • How to ensure that Medicaid and private insurers reimburse for all components of DBT, • How to improve access to DBT- especially for special populations such as youth, veterans and rural populations. If passed, the Dialectical Behavior Therapy Task Force will bring together patients, providers, legislators, and governmental agencies. We have also asked for representation from the insurance industry to be on the Task Force because we believe that solving problems as complex as mental health parity requires the engagement and collaboration of all parties. While differences may exist among members of the Task Force, their common goal of helping Missourians with mental health conditions lead healthy and fulfilling lives, will enable them to leave a legacy of bringing much needed change to our state. This is difficult for me, but please allow me to share a little about how I ended up here working on this bill. A very close friend had a son struggling with feeling suicidal and dysregulated. She shared with me that she found out about a therapy called DBT that might help her son, my godson. I looked into DBT, in an effort to help my godson, and being in the midst of mental health challenges myself, decided that DBT would benefit me. I encouraged my friend to send her son to DBT, too, but insurance didn't fully cover DBT, and she struggled to find a provider. A little over two years ago, my godson died by suicide. He never got the help he needed because of barriers like lack of insurance coverage and lack of providers. Aspire Advocates was partly born out of this loss and the bill is filed in memory of my godson and the other young Missourians who have been unable to access this incredibly powerful treatment. The problems my friend and godson faced when trying to get care still exist today. The root causes of these problems are complex and difficult to fix. Complex problems require the engagement of all interested parties and HB1723 will bring together Missouri patients, providers, organizations, agencies, and legislators in an effort to create a better behavioral health system for Missouri residents. Please support getting this life saving and quality of life enhancing care to Missourians in need. Vote yes for

HB1723, as amended.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KELLY BULANDA		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: mkbulanda@sbcglobal.net	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/10/2024 9:18 PM

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Please vote yes on HB1723 which will establish the Dialectical Behavior Therapy Task Force. This bill that will save lives and save money for Missourians with behavioral health disorders.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KELLY GREEN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: kellymorton315@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 3/11/2024 10:14 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Dialectical Behavioral Therapy saved my life. In a few days, I will turn 28, but I almost didn't live to see my 21st birthday. Since adolescence, I have struggled with depression and experienced trauma that left me unable to cope with everyday life. Over the years as my mental health deteriorated, I tried a number of different therapies, none of which seemed to help or better equip me to handle what life was throwing at me. I felt so much pain. I felt hopeless, like things would never change and I would always feel this low. I made an attempt on my own life and was hospitalized, but inpatient treatment still was not equipped to fully address my mental health crisis. I needed effective treatment, urgently. Upon discharge I was referred to Dialectical Behavioral Therapy, DBT, and the trajectory of my life completely changed. Unlike the therapy I'd had in the past, DBT taught me practical, effective coping skills to regulate my emotions and deescalate panic attacks. For the first time, I began to feel empowered and in control. I learned healthy, safe ways to manage my mental health without self harm. My weekly one-on-one sessions were accompanied by group sessions that allowed me to connect with others, and in this group environment, I was exposed to new perspectives. DBT treatment held me accountable for my health while providing me with the tools to be a better, more stable version of myself. It wasn't smooth sailing at first, and it took real work to feel those improvements, but years later I am still utilizing skills that I learned in my DBT sessions. I think differently than I used to, and I respond to stressors with more composure and confidence. But this life saving treatment would not have been possible without the financial support of my parents, and even a dip into my own savings. In your early 20s, it's difficult to afford anything, let alone \$170 cash-pay therapy sessions. My DBT treatment was not covered by my insurance. If I did not have my parents financial support, or the ability to work during my treatment period, I would not have been able to afford the treatment that saved my life. I'll forever be grateful for those privileges, but I am concerned that other young people in Missouri will be denied DBT treatment if we do not change the current insurance current billing codes and reimbursement policies for DBT providers. Most people cannot afford DBT as a cash-pay service, which would prevent them from receiving life saving treatment. During DBT, my therapist was available 24/7, so I never lacked in support. I felt comfortable being vulnerable and honest. DBT treatment improved my mental health and overall quality of life, which has allowed me to focus on my goals and progress into new and exciting chapters of life.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: KRISTEN SHULER		PHONE NUMBER: 417-261-5682	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: DBT OZARKS		TITLE: LCSW/OWNER	
ADDRESS: 1355 E. SUNSHINE STREET			
CITY: SPRINGFIELD		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65804
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 3/11/2024 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: MAY HALL		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 3/11/2024 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: RICHARD DAVID STEVENSON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: rstevenson827@sbcglobal.net	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/8/2024 4:06 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

"Dear Health and Mental Health Policy Committee members, Please support of House Bill 1723. I ask you to vote yes when your committee acts on this bill. As a Missourian and mental health advocate with NAMI St. Louis, I recognize House Bill 1723 is important to me because it makes life saving DBT treatment more accessible. Sincerely, Richard D. Stevenson 827 Westwood Place Saint Louis MO



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ROBERT KILO		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: kilorob@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/11/2024 8:21 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Please vote yes on HB1723, a bill that will save lives and save money for Missourians with behavioral health disorders.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ROBERT T ERNST		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: bobernst173@gmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/10/2024 10:18 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Please vote yes on HB 1723, a bill that will establish the Dialectical Behavior Therapy Task Force and save lives and money for Missourians with behavioral health issues and disorders.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SUSAN GIBSON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: Onesuegibson@protonmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/9/2024 2:49 PM
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: THOMAS MASSIMINO		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: t.j.massimosr@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 3/11/2024 4:10 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

Please approve HB 1723. The subject of suicide is very personal to me since I've lost a loved one to this scourge.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ASHLEY CHANCE		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: goldengunn7177@gmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/7/2024 4:02 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: DON BICKHAUS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: doniibecky@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/9/2024 10:51 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

NO SUPPORT HERE for a bill with a vague and with quite possible negative outcomes if approved. **DO NOT** move this bill through committee. Take a very close look at the wording of this bill.



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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: LISA PANNETT		PHONE NUMBER:
REPRESENTING: ARMORVINE		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: MO
EMAIL:		ZIP:
ATTENDANCE:		SUBMIT DATE: 3/11/2024 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: SHANNON COOPER		PHONE NUMBER: 660-890-1432
REPRESENTING: AMERICA'S HEALTH INSURANCE PLANS		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 208 MADISON STREET		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65101
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 3/11/2024 12:00 AM
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