

# HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 491

## 103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE WALSH MOORE.

2789H.011

JOSEPH ENGLER, Chief Clerk

1           **WHEREAS**, the Missouri Association of Public Administrators (MAPA) is the  
2 statewide organization representing county public administrators, who serve as court-  
3 appointed guardians and conservators for Missouri's most vulnerable citizens, including those  
4 with mental health disabilities, brain injuries, developmental disabilities, and advanced age  
5 conditions such as dementia; and

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7           **WHEREAS**, MAPA has consistently advocated for adequate resources, both for their  
8 county offices and for alternative community placements, to ensure proper care for  
9 individuals with mental disabilities and has worked to protect their safety and well-being  
10 despite budget cuts, increased caseloads, and a lack of community-based care options; and

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12           **WHEREAS**, the recent report by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) highlights the  
13 improper assignment of guardianship and use of nursing facilities for housing individuals  
14 with mental disabilities and underscores the urgent need for more appropriate community-  
15 based services to support their care. The DOJ's findings reaffirm the critical shortage of  
16 mental health resources in Missouri, which has been raised by MAPA for years, including in a  
17 2020 report published on the Department of Mental Health's website; and

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19           **WHEREAS**, MAPA acknowledges that nursing facilities are often unsuitable for  
20 individuals with severe mental health challenges who require higher levels of supervision,  
21 behavioral support, and therapeutic care. Despite this, the lack of adequate community  
22 resources for alternative placements makes it impossible to effectively transition these  
23 individuals into less restrictive settings as demanded by the DOJ; and

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25           **WHEREAS**, recent actions by the federal government, including the closure of large  
26 behavioral health facilities, have left many individuals without suitable placements,  
27 exacerbating the risk of homelessness, overburdening hospitals, and increasing pressure on  
28 the criminal justice system:

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30           **NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that we, the members of the Missouri  
31 House of Representatives, One Hundred Third General Assembly, First Regular Session,  
32 hereby:

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34           (1) Recognize the critical role of public administrators in caring for individuals with  
35 mental health disabilities and call for immediate state and federal action to increase funding  
36 for mental health services, expand community-based care options, and strengthen programs to  
37 ensure care for those in need twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week;

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39           (2) Urge the development of a comprehensive system to support the safe and effective  
40 transition of individuals with mental disabilities out of guardianship and into community  
41 settings only when sufficient resources are in place to guarantee their safety and integration  
42 into society;

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44           (3) Urge the general assembly to establish a dedicated committee tasked with  
45 exploring the issue of inadequate placements and treatment options across communities and  
46 work to identify gaps in current resources and propose actionable solutions aimed at ensuring  
47 all individuals have access to appropriate, effective, and accessible treatment and placement  
48 options;

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50           (4) Urge the House budget committee to thoroughly explore the issue of inadequate  
51 placements and treatment options within communities and to develop budgetary  
52 recommendations that address these critical needs; and

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54           (5) Call upon the state of Missouri and its agencies to increase collaboration and  
55 communication with public administrators and other stakeholders to create lasting, forward-  
56 moving solutions that ensure the dignity, safety, and care of the state's most vulnerable  
57 citizens.

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