

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 3053

Introduced by

Representatives Jensen, Price, Wentz

Senator Thane

1 A concurrent resolution directing the Legislative Council to study the feasibility and impact of
2 mental health and substance abuse parity in the state of North Dakota.

3 **WHEREAS**, it is recognized that mental and addictive disorders are among the most
4 prevalent and most often neglected health problems in our nation; and

5 **WHEREAS**, it is recognized that appropriate mental health services and substance
6 abuse treatment improve lives and increase productivity; and

7 **WHEREAS**, health plans offered by employers typically provide less coverage for
8 mental health and substance abuse treatment than for general medical and surgical services;
9 and

10 **WHEREAS**, "full parity" means that insurance benefits for any group of mental health
11 and substance abuse diagnoses are the same as insurance benefits for medical or surgical
12 diagnoses with respect to cost sharing, service limits, and annual or lifetime spending limits;
13 and

14 **WHEREAS**, the National Mental Health Parity Act of 1996 was passed by Congress,
15 signed by President Clinton, and implemented on January 1, 1998, and nineteen states,
16 including Minnesota and South Dakota, have mental health legislation in place and another
17 thirteen states have legislation pending; and

18 **WHEREAS**, the aforementioned thirty-two states have accumulated data concerning the
19 impact of mental health parity in their state, studies have also been conducted by Coopers and
20 Lybrand, Milliman and Robertson, Inc., Price Waterhouse, the Congressional budget office, and
21 the substance abuse and mental health services administration; and

22 **WHEREAS**, a study by the substance abuse and mental health services administration
23 found that mental health parity has had a small effect on health plan premiums, causing
24 increases of between 0.4 percent and 3.6 percent;

1 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**
2 **OF NORTH DAKOTA, THE SENATE CONCURRING THEREIN:**

3 That the Legislative Council study the feasibility and impact of mental health and
4 substance abuse parity in the state of North Dakota; and

5 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Legislative Council report its findings and
6 recommendations, with any legislation required to implement the recommendations, to the
7 Fifty-seventh Legislative Assembly.