

Fifty-sixth Legislative Assembly, State of North Dakota, begun in the Capitol in the City of Bismarck, on Tuesday, the fifth day of January, one thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine

**HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 3053
(Representatives Jensen, Price, Wentz)
(Senator Thane)**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Speaker of the House

President of the Senate

Chief Clerk of the House

Secretary of the Senate

Filed in this office this _____ day of _____, 1999,
at _____ o'clock _____ M.

Secretary of State