

July 9, 2008

The Honorable Alfred W. Speer
Clerk of the House of Representatives
State Capitol
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Re: House Bill No. 1385 by Representative Jackson

Dear Mr. Speer:

House Bill No. 1385 mandates the creation of the Mental Health Advisory Committee and charges the committee with, among other things, developing recommendations related to a revised reimbursement methodology for community mental health clinics and studying the certification and licensing criteria of Medicare-certified community mental health centers to be enrolled in Medicaid as community mental health clinics. While I agree with the benefit of multi-disciplinary input to the Medicaid program, I do not believe an advisory committee for such a narrow purpose, and without any expiration, should be placed in statute, particularly as it potentially relates to a Medicaid rate issue. Narrowly tailored rate issues should be addressed through the rule making process established in law, which provides for appropriate oversight by the Legislature. This established process allows the Department of Health and Hospitals to evaluate the impact of that particular issue on the larger delivery system, and I believe this comprehensive approach is critical to the successful operation of the Medicaid program.

For this reason, I have vetoed HB 1385, and hereby return it to the House of Representatives. I have issued Executive Order No. BJ 2008-24, which will serve to carry out this bill's intent.

Very truly yours,

Bobby Jindal
Governor

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