

# News...

*...from the Illinois House of Representatives*

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## **New Law Expands Access to Behavioral Health Treatment**

**CHICAGO** – Governor Pat Quinn signed House Bill 1152, co-sponsored by State Representative Sara Feigenholtz (D-Chicago), into law on Friday.

House Bill 1152 allows not-for-profit organizations and governmental entities serving individuals with mental illness, substance abuse and other behavioral disorders to be designated as “essential community behavior health care providers.” Organizations must meet certain criteria, including a proven commitment to serving low income or otherwise underserved populations.

“Emphasizing these kinds of broad community-based treatment options that are cost-efficient is key to treating mental illness smartly,” Feigenholtz said. “These organizations are providing results-driven services that will drastically improve the overall health and well-being of countless Illinoisans.”

Under this law, essential community behavior health care providers cannot restrict access to services based on financial limitations and must serve enrollees of all health insurers operating in the area the provider serves, including individuals covered under Medicaid and the state’s All Kids program. The Department of Human Services must also promote access to behavioral health services in the state health insurance exchange.

“Ultimately, this legislation aims to make mental and behavioral health care more accessible in every way,” said Feigenholtz. “Mental and behavioral health treatment should be within physical and financial reach for every individual who needs those services. This legislation helps to ensure that even the populations that have historically been left out of the mental health treatment arena can obtain these services.”

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