

# State of South Dakota

NINETY-FOURTH SESSION  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 2019

576B0190

## SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 2

Introduced by: Senators Sohlt, Ewing, Kennedy, Langer, Solano, Stalzer, and Wismer and Representatives Otten (Herman), Diedrich, Haugaard, Howard, Hunhoff, Jensen (Kevin), Johns, and Reed at the request of the Access to Mental Health Services Study Committee

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION, To provide for legislative task forces to study, report, and  
2 develop and consider recommendations and proposed legislation regarding sustainable  
3 improvements to the continuum of mental health services available in the state.

4 WHEREAS, mental health issues in the State of South Dakota constitute a public health  
5 crisis; and

6 WHEREAS, communities, families, and individuals face a broad spectrum of mental health  
7 challenges on a daily basis; and

8 WHEREAS, South Dakota is faced with a high rate of suicide; and

9 WHEREAS, productive, long-term solutions are needed to address mental health access; and

10 WHEREAS, regionally focused solutions are the pathway to provide mental health access  
11 for all citizens; and

12 WHEREAS, separate task forces should be established to study, review, and identify each  
13 of the following:

14 (1) Redefine acute mental health hospitalizations in the areas of short, intermediate, and



1 long-term placement, with emphasis on keeping individuals needing placement in  
2 community whenever possible;

3 (2) Reduce the overall use of acute mental health hospitalizations by developing and  
4 supporting existing alternatives where appropriate, create community-based short-  
5 stay alternatives, and develop day treatment options;

6 (3) Leverage telehealth and telemedicine to the full appropriate extent, with focus on the  
7 areas of acute assessment and crisis supports, along with mental health assessments  
8 and counseling;

9 (4) Redefine Human Service Center nursing home admission criteria and build mental  
10 health nursing home capacity for persons with organic brain damage; and

11 (5) Increase the capacity for transitional housing and residential services in communities  
12 to keep individuals closer to home, and develop caregiver supports; and

13 WHEREAS, the task forces should consist of subgroups to study each recommended area,  
14 as appointed by the Legislature, and task force subgroups should meet at least three times per  
15 year; and

16 WHEREAS, the task forces should make recommendations in a report to the Legislature no  
17 later than December 31, 2019, which should address changes necessary within state and county  
18 programs and any other areas deemed necessary:

19 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Senate of the Ninety-Fourth Legislature  
20 of the State of South Dakota, the House of Representatives concurring therein, that the  
21 Executive Board of the Legislative Research Council is hereby directed to establish task forces  
22 on the status of mental health care in order to further the objectives described in this resolution.