

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 214

By Massey

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate Commissioner Marie Williams on receiving the National Council for Behavioral Health's 2019 Excellence in Advocacy Individual Achievement Award.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those exceptional public servants who work with purpose and commitment to create positive change for Tennesseans living with mental health and substance abuse challenges; and

WHEREAS, Marie Williams, LCSW, Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (DMHSAS), has been named the recipient of the 2019 Excellence in Advocacy Individual Achievement Award by the National Council for Behavioral Health (NCBH), the unifying voice of America's healthcare organizations that deliver mental health and addictions treatment and services; and

WHEREAS, NCBH's Awards of Excellence recognize and honor individuals and organizations in behavioral health care for their ingenuity, hard work, and dedication to improving the lives of Americans living with mental illnesses and addictions; the Excellence in Advocacy Award honors an individual who has demonstrated exemplary efforts and results over the last twelve months advocating for legislative or regulatory policies that increase access to mental health and substance use services; and

WHEREAS, Marie Williams was reappointed as DMHSAS Commissioner by Governor Bill Lee after serving in the role for the final two years of Governor Bill Haslam's administration; during her tenure, she has served as a leader in addressing the opioid crisis, emergency psychiatric services, and criminal justice reform; and

WHEREAS, while adroitly managing a \$380 million dollar budget and more than 1,800 employees, Commissioner Williams has excelled in her quest to make DMHSAS the nation's

most innovative and proactive state behavioral health authority for people dealing with mental health and substance abuse problems; and

WHEREAS, while Commissioner Williams modestly attributes her success and this award to "the guidance, counsel, and example of so many colleagues and teammates," we know that she is a stalwart and influential advocate for increasing the public's access to comprehensive, high-quality mental health and substance abuse care that affords every opportunity for recovery; and

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly find it appropriate to acknowledge and applaud Commissioner Marie Williams on this special occasion; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor and congratulate Commissioner Marie Williams, LCSW, of the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services on receiving the National Council for Behavioral Health's 2019 Excellence in Advocacy Individual Achievement Award, salute her ongoing support of and commitment to Tennesseans with mental health and substance abuse challenges, and extend to her our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.