



Frank Anselmo, MPA
Chief Executive Officer
3085 Stevenson Drive, 3rd Floor
Springfield, Illinois 62703
Phone: 217/585-1600
Fax: 217/585-1601
www.cbha.net

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Contact:
Frank Anselmo, 217-622-8774
David Ormsby, 312-342-9638

Coulson Bill Aims to Speed Payment to Struggling Illinois Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, Drug Treatment Providers *State House Panel Ok's Plan, Illinois House Vote Expected Soon*

(Springfield, IL) – An Illinois House panel last week unanimously supported legislation to help speed state payments owed to Illinois mental health, developmental disabilities, and drug treatment providers struggling under the weight of unpaid state bills.

The House State Government Administration Committee on February 25 voted 17-0 to approve House Bill 616, sponsored by State Rep. Beth Coulson (R-Glenview).

“Local community health care providers, who are helping people to deter suicide, forestall family violence, or care for disabled children, are withering on the financial vine because they are not getting paid on time,” said Frank Anselmo, CEO of the Community Behavioral Healthcare Association of Illinois.

“I get a telephone call nearly weekly from a provider who is only two or three weeks shy of disbanding care and shutting their doors because the state is 90 days to 120 days late paying its bills, “ said Anselmo.

“Behavioral health care is on the brink of collapse in multiple communities around the state.”

Coulson’s legislation requires the Comptroller to give priority to mental health, developmental disabilities, and drug treatment providers after the state’s debt service obligations and payroll have been met.

The bill’s bipartisan co-sponsors include: State Representatives [LaShawn Ford](#), [Daniel Beiser](#), [Thomas Holbrook](#), [Mike Smith](#), [Patricia Bellock](#), [Jim Watson](#), [Rosemary Mulligan](#), [Lisa Dugan](#), [Jim Sacia](#), [Robert Pritchard](#), [Greg Harris](#), [Kay Hatcher](#), [Fred Crespo](#), [Mike Bost](#), [Sandra Pihos](#), [Dan Reitz](#), [Jack Franks](#), [Suzanne Bassi](#) and [Lou Lang](#).

The full Illinois House is soon expected to vote on the measure.