

# Mississippi Association of Supervisors

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## MEMORANDUM

To: County Administrators, Supervisors, Chancery Clerks

From: Derrick Surrette, Executive Director

Date: March 2, 2023

Re: Legislation Addressing Mental Health Could Impact County Budgets

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The attached document is an image of Section 8 located in House Bill 1222. A link to the full bill is also provided below. This section increases the unfunded mandate placed on counties for mental health-related services.

The bill takes a comprehensive approach to addressing the mental health crisis in the State, and it is undoubtedly needed.

The original version (*before being amended and stripped from a House Floor amendment*) had funding in the form of a tax diversion from tobacco vapor products to fund the housing/treatment of mental health patients. This was very important to MAS because we often hear from our membership regarding the need to get mental health patients out of the county jail facilities and into their proper housing facilities. NOTE: There are still talks of doing an appropriation to address this housing issue, but as of now, funding that will specifically address housing mental patients is not in the bill, but the bill does currently set up a special fund to receive state revenue if there is a consensus to provide state revenue.

MAS staff has spoken with the Senate Health and Welfare Committee Chairman and the author of the bill to share our concerns regarding section 8.

We encourage you to take the time to review this bill and provide your feedback to MAS so we can share your concerns with House and Senate members. We also strongly encourage you to call your Senate and House delegation if you have any concerns about this measure.

To view the full bill with the current Senate “Strike All” language as amended by the Senate, please click the link below.

[http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/documents/2023/dt/sam/HB1222\\_S\\_Cmte\\_Amend\\_01.pdf](http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/documents/2023/dt/sam/HB1222_S_Cmte_Amend_01.pdf)

Thank you for all you do in working with MAS and your local legislative delegation.



To view the full bill with the current Senate “Strike All” language as amended by the Senate, please scan the QR code.

588 amount no greater than the applicable reimbursement rate based on  
589 the Mississippi Medicaid reimbursement rate or schedule, and the  
590 county shall not be liable for any costs that exceed the  
591 Mississippi Medicaid reimbursement rate or schedule.

592 (b) For indigent respondents with no payor source or  
593 without payor coverage where the chancellor has determined that  
594 the respondent is in need of psychiatric treatment and no State  
595 Department of Mental Health beds or community mental health center  
596 crisis stabilization beds are available, the respondent's county  
597 of residence shall bear the costs of treatment at an amount  
598 negotiated with the treatment facilities, but the county shall not  
599 be liable for any costs that exceed the Mississippi Medicaid  
600 reimbursement rate or schedule.

601 (c) This subsection (5) shall not take effect until  
602 July 1, 2026, and then only in counties where the Director of the  
603 Department of Mental Health certifies that there are sufficient  
604 facilities available at a reasonable cost and at a reasonable  
605 location.

606 ( \* \* \*~~56~~) (a) Whenever a licensed psychologist, nurse  
607 practitioner or physician assistant who is certified to complete  
608 examinations for the purpose of commitment or a licensed physician  
609 has reason to believe that a person poses an immediate substantial  
610 likelihood of physical harm to himself or others or is gravely  
611 disabled and unable to care for himself by virtue of mental  
612 illness, as defined in Section 41-21-61(e), then the physician,