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Advancing Georgia's Counties.

## NEWS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### **GEORGIA COUNTIES URGE STATE LEADERS TO CONTINUE MENTAL HEALTH REFORM EFFORTS**

*All 159 counties adopt a resolution urging the Governor and General Assembly to pass mental health reform legislation and dedicate state budgetary funding for additional resources.*

**ATLANTA, Ga. (February 26, 2024)** – All 159 Georgia counties have adopted resolutions urging Gov. Brian Kemp and the General Assembly to continue mental health reform efforts this legislative session. The effort to have each county adopt a resolution specifically urging the Governor and General Assembly to continue efforts to enhance citizens' access to vital mental health services – including the provision of state budgetary funding for additional behavioral health crisis centers across the state, additional co-responder units, and other resources to assist those with mental health and substance abuse disorders – was spearheaded by the Association County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG). Mental Health Reform is a 2024 ACCG legislative priority and the presidential initiative of Baldwin County Commissioner Henry Craig, who leads the association.

“Counties are the closest constitutional form of government to their constituents and are often on the frontline of addressing pressing community issues like mental health,” said ACCG President Henry Craig. “In recent years, Georgia has made significant strides regarding mental health reform, and ACCG and Georgia’s counties have played a critical role in spearheading those efforts. As the mental health crisis persists, it is incumbent upon local and state leaders to devise solutions for all who call our state home.”

Georgia’s counties acknowledge and appreciate previous legislative efforts, such as the passage of the Mental Health Parity Act in 2022 and the introduction of additional legislation in 2023 and 2024. County officials are especially appreciative of Governor Kemp for including a total increase of \$205 million for mental health funding in this year’s state budget proposals. However, they recognize the significant need for further action by members of the General Assembly to affirm their commitment to improving mental health services.

“ACCG is grateful for Georgia’s executive, legislative, and judicial branches for their work toward continued mental health reform in recent years,” said ACCG Executive Director Dave Wills. “We look forward to partnering with them to devise solutions which will afford the much-needed additional resources to our local communities.”

Click [here](#) to view the model mental health resolution that was provided to all 159 Georgia counties. Every county either adopted the resolution as written or some variation of it to better reflect their local needs.

Click [here](#) to view ACCG’s 2024 Mental Health Legislative Priority.

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ACCG is Georgia’s county association and works on behalf of county officials and their communities by providing public policy and legislative advocacy, leadership development, civic and community engagement initiatives, insurance and retirement programs that specialize in local government needs and other cost-saving programs. Formed in 1914 when county officials came together to help fund the state’s first highway department, ACCG today serves as a catalyst for advancing Georgia’s counties. For more information, go to [www.accg.org](http://www.accg.org).