

THE GREEN WIRE

SENATOR TIMOTHY P. GREEN - DISTRICT 13

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Sen. Green Secures Funding for Bellefontaine Habilitation Center

Sen. Timothy Green, D-Spanish Lake secured \$384,624 of new General Revenue to ensure that the Bellefontaine Habilitation Center is able to maintain services at a 172 bed level, effectively continuing operation of the state run facility through 2008. This matches the Governor's privatization plan to have a 120-bed private facility and 52-bed state run facility on the Bellefontaine campus. Over \$20 Million was appropriated for Bellefontaine for FY 08.

“The General Assembly also approved a 6% total pay increase for direct care staff across all Mental Health Facilities an increase of \$3.8 Million.” said Sen. Green.

Sen. Green supported an increase of \$15.9 Million to effectively care for individuals with the highest level of need (all 11s and 12s on the Division of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (MRDD) waitlist – the waitlist scale is 2 to 12 with 12 being highly disabled and deserving the highest level of care).

Sen. Green successfully fought for the addition of \$19.2 Million for a 2% provider rate increase to MRDD and a 4% provider rate increase for Comprehensive Psychiatric Services and for the prevention, treatment and rehabilitation programs for alcohol and other drug abuse.

“Alcohol and drug abuse costs the state's economy an estimated \$6 Billion a year in lost productivity, healthcare expenditures, property damage, and crime.” said Sen. Green.

During the final weeks of the 2007 legislative session Sen. Green has fought for the passage of Senate Bill 174, as amended, that contains mental health reforms that are urgently needed to ensure the safety of the residents in private facilities.

The reform and accountability legislation would:

- Ban further employment anywhere of staff found to be abusive;
- Open private facilities to the scrutiny of the state's Sunshine laws;
- Mandate reporting of abuse and neglect, including medication errors, in private facilities;
- Require staff turnover reporting to the General Assembly;
- Require dismissal of private contractor employees who violate state laws and rules;
- Require private facility staff to have training comparable to state center employees, to be paid for by the private provider; and
- Place a moratorium on any Hab center transfers to private facilities until the legislation is fully implemented.