

**MINUTES
THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TREATMENT ACCESS
LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE**

August 12, 2015

The Behavioral Health Treatment Access Legislative Task Force met at 1:00 p.m., on Wednesday, August 12, 2015, in Room 149, State Capitol, Little Rock, Arkansas.

Task Force members present: Senator Scott Flipppo, Representative Clarke Tucker, Carole Baxter, Ann Brown, Dan Honey, Kevin Murphy, David Sterling, Mark Thurman, and David Williams.

Other Legislative Members present: Senator Linda Collins-Smith, Representatives James Sorvillo, and Dwight Tosh.

Representative Tucker called the meeting to order. The minutes from the June 18, 2015 and July 13, 2015 meetings were approved by acclamation.

Behavioral Health Challenges for Law Enforcement

Ronnie Baldwin, Executive Director, Arkansas Sheriff's Association, Sheriff Marty Boyd, Craighead County, Sheriff Bill Hollenbeck, Sebastian County, and Sheriff Ron Brown, Crawford County, were recognized to address issues with the growing number of mentally ill offenders overcrowding the state's county jails and prison system. Sheriff Hollenbeck stated prison systems do not provide treatment services for mentally ill offenders. He explained how other states are using law enforcement crisis intervention teams (CIT) and Crisis Stabilization Units to divert non-violent offenders with mental illness from the prison system to treatment services. He said statistics show Crisis Stabilization Units are a cost savings to the state's criminal justice system, reduces recidivism and improves public safety.

Ms. Baxter feels the task force should examine civil commitment laws.

Access to Behavioral Health Treatment within the Community Corrections System

Kevin Murphy, Chief Deputy Director, Arkansas Community Corrections (ACC), gave an overview of resources needed to lower ACC's case loads to the national average. Mr. Murphy explained how parolees needing mental health treatment, are having problems locating providers who accept plans on the exchange.

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.