

RESOLUTION NO. 8 of 2022

RESOLUTION BY THE CLARION COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REQUESTING APPROPRIATE FUNDING TO SUPPORT THE CRUMBLING MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM IN THE FY 2022-2023 STATE BUDGET

WHEREAS, counties provide essential community-based mental health services such as crisis intervention, community residential programs, family-based support and outpatient care, which are critical to the well-being of our constituents and our communities; and

WHEREAS, as the providers of community-based mental health services, counties are seeing demands for mental health services in communities that far exceed state funding levels and without adequate and sustainable funding, counties may not be able to meet the mental health needs of some of our most vulnerable residents; and

WHEREAS, in 2012 the commonwealth cut \$84 million that counties used to fund programs for people with intellectual disabilities, mental health challenges, and other needs forcing programs to close and putting the human services system into a vulnerable state; and

WHEREAS, the membership of the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP) made the top priority of the association's advocacy in 2022 the "Appropriate Funding to Support the Crumbling Mental Health System"; and

WHEREAS, state funding has lagged far behind needs and caseloads for years, which has negatively affected services while also putting tension on communities and local budgets; and

WHEREAS, the Center for Rural Progress published a report on Suicide Trends and Prevention in Rural Pennsylvania Counties and Schools and key findings included the steep rise in suicides in Pennsylvania over the past two decades and that the increase was greater in rural communities; and

WHEREAS, Governor Wolf's initial budget proposal included supporting the behavioral health needs of Pennsylvanians by investing \$36.6 million additional funds in county mental health base funds on top of \$75 million in federal funds for recruitment and retention payments to qualifying home and community-based service providers, as well as \$18.8 million to provide services for individuals with intellectual disabilities and/or autism currently on the emergency waitlist; and

WHEREAS, Clarion County has invested in community-based mental health services that coordinate and invest in programs and services that meet the needs and challenges of local communities, including inpatient psychiatric hospitalization, outpatient therapy, outpatient psychiatry/medication management, blended case management, certified peer specialist, supported housing, psychiatric rehabilitation, Play Therapy, Intensive Behavioral Health Services, Family Based Mental Health Services and MultiSystemic Therapy; and

WHEREAS, counties will need collaboration between the legislature and administration to work closely with them on a targeted, strategic investment of dollars into community mental health services at the county level in order to continue the existing safety net and bolster the availability of mental health services to those who need them as vital steps in the right direction; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Clarion County Board of Commissioners do hereby support an increase in funding for community mental health base programs in accordance with the priorities of the County Commissioner Association of Pennsylvania by the General Assembly and Administration; and

RESOLVED, that the Clarion County Board of Commissioners will submit this resolution and accompanying letter of support to the regional state representatives and senators, and provide copies to the state Department of Humans Services and the Governor's office as well as regional commissioners in an effort to respectfully request the administration and General Assembly take steps to address our crumbling mental health system.

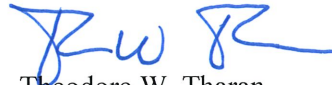
ADOPTED by the Board of Commissioners of the County of Clarion, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, this 26th day of April, 2022.

Attest:

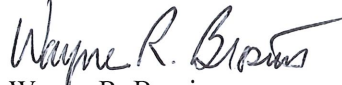


Mindy L. Frampton
Chief Clerk

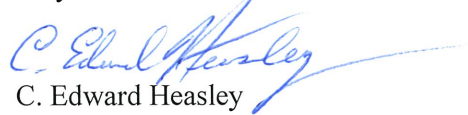
Clarion County Board of Commissioners



Theodore W. Tharan



Wayne R. Brosius



C. Edward Heasley