

105TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. RES. 587

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to the seriousness of the national problems associated with mental illness and with respect to congressional intent to establish a mental illness task force.

---

## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 8, 1998

Mrs. ROUKEMA (for herself and Ms. KAPTUR) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce

---

## RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to the seriousness of the national problems associated with mental illness and with respect to congressional intent to establish a mental illness task force.

Whereas mental illness is not a character flaw, but a tangible and treatable illness as real as hypertension, cancer, or heart disease;

Whereas great strides are being made in the diagnosis and treatment of mental illness;

Whereas there remain gaping holes in the network of Federal, State, and local services designed to identify and treat individuals with mental illness;

Whereas, more and more, America is witnessing violence resulting from untreated mental illness and a failed policy of deinstitutionalization without any proper community follow-up;

Whereas, all too often, we hear of situations where an individual with a mental disorder has not received adequate treatment and has reacted violently and endangered himself or herself or, tragically, has taken the life of another;

Whereas one such situation occurred at the Capitol when Officer J.J. Chestnut and Special Agent John Gibson tragically lost their lives;

Whereas last year alone, over 1,000 homicides were directly attributable to improperly treated mental illnesses;

Whereas, although the treatment of the mentally ill is primarily a function of the States, there is a significant sharing of costs between the Federal Government and the States for such treatment, and there are some joint responsibilities of the Federal Government and the States for such treatment;

Whereas it is necessary to conduct an in-depth analysis of the effectiveness of mental health block grants and of the Federal prison costs attributed to mental illness; and

Whereas it is also necessary to conduct an in-depth analysis of issues relating to reciprocity between the States: Now, therefore, be it

- 1       *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Rep-
- 2       resentatives that a temporary task force or advisory com-
- 3       mittee on mental illness should be established that would
- 4       be responsible for probing the serious dimensions of the
- 5       national problems associated with mental illness, including

1 determining the extent to which individuals with mental  
2 illness are not receiving proper treatment and the extent  
3 to which violence is resulting from the lack of such treat-  
4 ment.

