

DURHAM BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

*Resolution*

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF FUNDING TO MEET THE MENTAL HEALTH, INTELLECTUAL/DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES, AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER SERVICE NEEDS OF THE CITIZENS OF DURHAM COUNTY**

- WHEREAS,** Durham County recognizes that, with appropriate services and supports, individuals and families dealing with mental illness and substance use disorders can achieve recovery and that those with intellectual/developmental disabilities can live productive lives in our communities; and
- WHEREAS,** the amount of resources needed for such services and supports are increasing due to North Carolina’s increasing population; and
- WHEREAS,** Durham County is a member of Alliance Health (formerly known as Alliance Behavioral Healthcare), a public Local Management Entity/Managed Care Organization (LME/MCO) responsible for providing system management and oversight for approximately 471,000 Medicaid-covered and uninsured North Carolinians across four counties; and
- WHEREAS,** consistent with the expectations of the North Carolina General Assembly and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Alliance’s Board of Directors has developed, and Alliance’s intent is to implement, a comprehensive reinvestment plan benefiting the citizens of Durham County with service enhancements, including housing initiatives and innovative evidenced-based and crisis services, as part of a focused effort to reduce unnecessary emergency department admissions and to divert people from our criminal justice system; and
- WHEREAS,** while the North Carolina General Assembly passed mental health reform legislation in 2001 with the intent of improving clinical services and deinstitutionalizing, State funding for North Carolina’s behavioral healthcare system has been inconsistent and inadequate for more than 17 years since this legislation became law; and
- WHEREAS,** the North Carolina General Assembly has reduced State funding for behavioral health services (known as single-stream funding) by more than \$458 million, including a more than \$67 million reduction in funding to Alliance, over the past four years while requiring the LME/MCOs to continue offering the same level of State-funded services as before such reductions; and
- WHEREAS,** despite these significant single-stream funding reductions, Alliance has continued serving the uninsured and underinsured using the remaining State funds and portions of its savings intended to be used for implementing its reinvestment plan; and
- WHEREAS,** while it is Alliance’s intent to implement its comprehensive reinvestment plan enhancing services for the citizens of Durham County, State single-stream funding has been reduced for four consecutive years and such continued reductions have forced Alliance to eliminate, or halt work on, items from its reinvestment plan; and
- WHEREAS,** Durham County has continued to fund Alliance with County dollars to supplement services to our residents, but we are concerned that additional reductions in behavioral health funding by the State may increase the need for the local allocation and place additional strain on other County services such as Emergency Medical Services (EMS), jails, and other social service resources.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** that we, the Durham County Board of Commissioners do hereby request that the North Carolina General Assembly:

- Stop cutting Alliance Health’s State single-stream funding so that such funds can be utilized to strengthen access to healthcare services for the mental health, intellectual/developmental disabilities, and substance use disorder needs of uninsured and underinsured Durham County citizens; and
- Allow Alliance Health to continue to utilize its savings to reinvest in enhanced, innovative services in our communities rather than mandating that such funds be used to replace previously reduced State funding.

This 8<sup>th</sup> day of April 2019.

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Wendy Jacobs, Chair

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James Hill, Jr., Vice-Chair

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Heidi Carter

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Brenda A. Howerton

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Ellen Reckhow

