



S U P P O R T

MEMORANDUM IN

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OF

A. 9563A – Gunther / S. 7207 - Ortt

The CSEA strongly supports this legislation.

This legislation amends section 7.17(e) of the mental hygiene law to limit the length of time that a notice of closure or significant service reduction is in effect to twenty-four months.

Current law requires the Office of Mental Health (OMH) to give at least 12 months notice to affected local governments, employees and employee organizations prior to the closure or substantial reduction in services of an OMH facility. The existing law was set up to create a methodical approach to closing OMH facilities, ensuring a smoother transition for clients, affected communities and employees.

However, the law does not have a maximum amount of time that the notice can be in effect. Due to this, OMH has issued notices to facilities that have been in effect for years, without patients, staff, or the public knowing if they will close or downsize a facility.

This current practice is an abuse of this law. The intent was to give facilities, communities, and workers time to plan for the imminent closure or reduction of services at a facility. The passage of this legislation will create some certainty and ensure that OMH complies with the spirit of this law.

On behalf of 300,000 active and retired, public and private employees across the state, CSEA strongly urges the approval of this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

Fran Turner
Director