

Dear Respected Louisiana State Senate Health and Welfare Committee Member:

I am asking you to vote NO on HB 181 - this bill would do a disservice to Louisianans requiring hospitalization in a mental health facility.

Louisiana House of Representatives member Dustin Miller introduced HB 181 to allow Nurse Practitioners (NPs) to admit patients to mental health facilities WITHOUT Physician supervision. These patients are a very vulnerable population as they are almost certainly suffering an acute mental health crisis which very often requires their hospitalization in a mental health facility against their will.

Let me be very clear - NPs are currently hospitalizing patients in mental health facilities but WITH Physician collaborators. There is no need to pass legislation for something that is already allowed by law. The truth is that if HB 181 is passed then NPs will still hospitalize patients in mental health facilities but in an UNSUPERVISED manner. This is dangerous and would do a disservice to mental health patients.

During testimony in a recent House of Representatives Health and Wellness Committee meeting, Louisiana House of Representative member Dustin Miller claimed that Physicians would still be involved in the admission process even if HB 181 passes. This is simply NOT TRUE. In fact, if HB 181 passes (and in combination with HB 495, now named Senate H&W Amendment 2254) then NPs will be able to involuntarily hospitalize mental health patients in a manner completely UNSUPERVISED by Physicians. Mental health crises are potentially life threatening emergencies and it is precisely then that patients require and deserve Psychiatrists - Physicians who are the most expert of mental health professionals - caring for them. All Louisianans deserve Physician-led care!

Please vote NO on HB 181!

Thank you!