

Mich. Dem. Party Resolution Supporting Mental Health Parity Legislation
Adopted Feb. 24, 2007

WHEREAS, the January 12, 2007 MIRS Capitol Capsule quoted Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick of Detroit stating "mental health problems account for 60% of the crime we (Detroit) have to deal with and 80% of the homeless problem. We need to get some results"; and

WHEREAS, other cities in Michigan are showing similar statistics that persons experiencing mental illness are now ending up in jail, prison or incarcerated without proper treatment or medication; and

WHEREAS, mental health parity would require insurance companies and health care providers to treat mental illness with the same regard as physical health or any other disease; and

WHEREAS, mental health parity legislation won the approval of the State Senate¹ in 2006, progressing further than this legislation has ever progressed; and

WHEREAS, 42 states have passed parity legislation in some fashion and none have repealed their parity legislation; and

WHEREAS, Governor Granholm's Mental Health Committee² in 2004 recommended parity legislation for Michigan and in her 2006 State of the State address she stated: "It is important to cover mental health as well as physical health"³; and

WHEREAS, nine million federal employees have had comprehensive parity under Presidential executive order since 2001, and studies of federal employee parity in 2006 showed less out-of-pocket expenditures for members with virtually no increase in insurance premium cost; and

WHEREAS, in 2001 the Congressional Budget Office estimated that the cost of mental health parity "would equal about 0.9% of employer-sponsored health insurance premiums and that this is consistent with other actuarial studies that have been done on this issue."

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Michigan Democratic Party urges the Michigan Legislature to adopt this legislation.

¹ Correction not included in Resolution: The Michigan State Senate reported out parity bills, SB 229 and 230, and recommended that they be passed in May of 2006, but a vote of the full Senate did not come about.

²Correction not included in Resolution: The Governor had a Mental Health *Commission* in 2004.

³ Correction not included in Resolution: The Governor's exact quote was that "it is as important to cover mental health as it is physical health."