



COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON

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December 4, 2024

The Honorable Nick Miller
352 Main Capitol Building
Senate Box 203014
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3014

Dear Senator Miller:

This correspondence is directed to your attention concerning mental health funding for Pennsylvania counties at the state level, specifically as we look towards the next Pennsylvania State Budget.

Pennsylvania residents, and especially our constituents in Northampton County, have waited long enough while the impacts of 16 years of not keeping pace with mental health needs have unraveled our mental health system. Counties throughout the Commonwealth constantly struggle to maintain community-based mental health services because of the lag in funding for well over a decade. While funds were slightly increased within the FY 2024-2025 State Budget, which many of us were grateful for, we desperately need to build upon this in the future.

According to the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP), counties need more than \$1 billion in additional mental health base funds to fully support the exponential growth of behavioral health needs in our communities. This would account for a restoration of the cut from a decade ago, provide increases for inflation across the past 15 years, address the significant residential waiting list needs, and invest in the staffing needed to provide case management that have multiplied in both number and complexity.

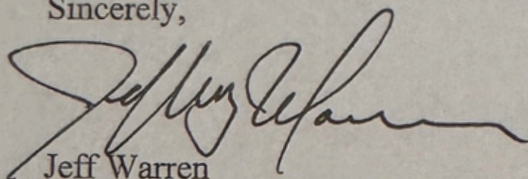
Many of my County Commissioner colleagues throughout Pennsylvania recognize that it will take time to rebuild Pennsylvania's mental health infrastructure and create long-term sustainability. That is why members of the General Assembly and the Governor's administration need a multi-phased approach that builds over time to address these problems over the course of the next few years. This is not an easy fix, but a thorough and detailed plan of action coming from our state leaders is desperately needed.

More and more of our Pennsylvania residents and constituents need mental health funding and resources as we continue to come out of the pandemic. As a society, we have collectively done well when it comes

to raising awareness of how addressing mental health needs can benefit individuals as well as communities. However, we must do better in the future.

I hope that you will take the lead on this issue as we look towards the next Pennsylvania State Budget. Please feel free reach out with any questions or concerns you have regarding this correspondence. I look forward to your response, and how we can work together to make real change when it comes to our mental health funding policies in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Warren", written in a cursive style.

Jeff Warren
County Commissioner

Enclosure