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**HOUSE BILL NO. 1062**

Offered January 11, 2006

Prefiled January 11, 2006

*A BILL to require the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services to develop and operate a pilot program for the provision of specialized geriatric mental health services.*

Patrons—Watts, Amundson, Brink, Bulova, Callahan, Ebbin, Eisenberg, Englin, Hugo, Marsden, Moran, Plum, Rust, Scott, J.M., Shannon and Sickles; Senators: Howell, Ticer and Whipple

Referred to Committee on Health, Welfare and Institutions

Whereas, older adults, age 65 and over, often are denied mental health services that are available to younger individuals; and

Whereas, treatment services to older adults often are not age appropriate or provided by staff trained in geriatrics; and

Whereas, community residential facilities often are not willing to accept placement of older adults because of issues associated with their age; and

Whereas, older adults are becoming a larger segment of the population, and the number of older adults in Virginia is expected to increase by over 100,000 from 2005 to 2020; now, therefore

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

*1. §1. That the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services (Department) shall develop a two-year pilot program (program) for the provision of specialized geriatric mental health services. The pilot program shall be located in the City of Alexandria and the Counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William.*

*In developing the Program, the Department shall consult with the Department for the Aging and with area community services boards. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance with development of the program, upon request.*

*The program shall:*

*1. Serve up to 1,000 adults annually, age 65 and older (older adults), with serious mental illness;*

*2. Provide for ongoing consultation and training to 50 residential facilities housing older adults, including long-term care facilities, assisted living facilities, and other group settings housing older adults; and*

*3. Expand specialized geriatric mental health services by adding geriatric mental health support to adult day programs serving older adults and adding 30 mental health Intermediate Care Facility (ICF) beds.*

*Program objectives shall include:*

*1. Preventing psychiatric and nursing home institutionalization, thereby improving quality of life to older adults and reducing expense to the Commonwealth;*

*2. Shortening hospital stays by facilitating discharge to community services and providing community support;*

*3. Promoting community linkages to better serve older adults and strengthen the existing network of housing and services;*

*4. Tailoring mental health services to the unique needs of the aging population; and*

*5. Serving as a model for services throughout the Commonwealth in preparation for the "Elder Boom."*

*The program shall incorporate evaluation criteria, including the number of individuals receiving services, the extent to which the services provided enabled individuals to avoid institutionalization, the program's cost-effectiveness in reducing Medicaid and other public expenditures, the successes achieved and problems encountered, the feasibility of statewide expansion of the program, and recommendations for improvement.*

*The Department shall submit an interim evaluation report to the House Committee on Health, Welfare and Institutions and the Senate Committee on Education and Health no later than November 30, 2007. A final evaluation report shall be submitted no later than November 30, 2008. The reports shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.*

**2. That the pilot program shall begin operating no later than January 1, 2007.**

**3. That the provisions of this act shall expire on July 1, 2009.**

INTRODUCED

HB1062