

Wilmington, Delaware
April 7, 2022

#0162

Sponsor:

**Council
Member
Cabrera**

Co-Sponsors:

**Council
Members
Mills
B. Fields**

WHEREAS, House Bill 303 would amend Chapter 33, Title 18 of the Delaware Code by adding a new § 3370E to require coverage of annual behavioral health well check. This bill also amends Chapter 35, Title 18 of the Delaware Code by adding a new § 3571Z to require coverage of annual behavioral health well check. This bill also amends Chapter 5, Title 31 of the Delaware Code by adding a new § 530 to require coverage of annual behavioral health well check. This bill also amends Chapter 52, Title 29 of the Delaware Code by adding a new § 5215 to require coverage of annual behavioral health well check; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 53 million Americans have a mental illness, and of those, 14.2 million have a serious mental illness. Approximately one-half of the 53 million Americans with mental illness and one-third with severe mental illness are not receiving treatment. Insurance coverage for regular mental health check-ups will increase access to mental health professionals who can identify and treat those with behavioral issues to mitigate the impact on the individuals and their communities; and

WHEREAS, poor mental health causes an increase in unhealthy behaviors, including, but not limited to, binge drinking, illegal drug use, smoking, and poor diet choices. These behaviors are risk factors associated with increased preventable premature deaths and suicides. In 2019, suicide was the second leading cause of death among American adolescents aged 12 to 17 years old, and in 2018, alcohol and tobacco were the lead causes of preventable deaths; and

WHEREAS, one in five New Castle County residents reported experiencing depression, binge drinking, or using tobacco products. In 2017, the City of Wilmington's

overdose rate was 67.7 per 100,000 population, the highest in the state. One in ten New Castle youth reported prescription pill abuse, one in five reported tobacco abuse, and 12 percent said they had made suicide plans. Many of these behaviors could be prevented with access to appropriate mental health treatment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILMINGTON that the Wilmington City Council strongly urges the Delaware General Assembly to support House Bill 303 to require annual behavioral health well checks to be covered by insurance providers in the state.

Passed by City Council,

ATTEST: _____
City Clerk

SYNOPSIS: This Resolution urges the Delaware General Assembly to support House Bill 303 that will require coverage by insurance providers to include annual behavioral health exams for state residents.