



Testimony in Support of HB663

TO: House Subcommittee #2 on Health, Welfare and Institutions
FROM: Lisa Dailey, Executive Director of Treatment Advocacy Center (Arlington)
HEARING: Thursday February 3, 2022 at 7:00 am

Dear Chair Hodges and members of the Subcommittee:

I am writing to urge you to pass HB663 as a better organization of existing statutory provisions concerning mandatory outpatient treatment (MOT). In the last session a number of substantive provisions relating to MOT passed the legislature and were signed into law.

A delayed enactment of July 2022 was included with the specific purpose of allowing the statute to be reorganized to make implementation of these substantive reforms simpler for practitioners, CSBs and special justices and simpler for all to comprehend. As a member of the original MOT work group, I can attest and members of this subcommittee may recall the unanimous agreement expressed by representatives of the courts, advocacy groups, CSBs, VACSB, practitioners and individuals and family members with lived experience that the existing statute is poorly organized and difficult to navigate, and a reorganization for clarity was universally desired.

The proposed reorganization of the statute included in HB 663 moves provisions regarding pathways and criteria for MOT into a section separate from the emergency evaluation and inpatient admission provisions, and also moves provisions regarding monitoring and court review into a new section to make application of the statute simpler to follow.

This is all HB663 does or is intended to do. Substantive changes to the MOT statute were made in the past session and are already part of existing law, to be implemented in July 2022 whether HB663 passes or not. This bill is strictly a reorganization of provisions. I urge the subcommittee not to entertain red-herring arguments about mandatory outpatient treatment generally as this bill is strictly intended to better organize what is already authorized under statute. Debate or amendment should be limited to those issues.