



Health Professionals and Allied Employees/AFT/AFL-CIO
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Emerson, NJ 07630
(201)262-5005
www.hpae.org

August 23, 2017

Dear Senator:

Re: Oppose Governor Christie Reorganization Plan 001-2017

I am writing to ask for your vote in opposing Governor Christie's Reorganization Plan 001—2017 and support the Senate companion to ACR254. On behalf of Health Professionals and Allied Employees 13,000 nurses and health professionals, I am asking you to vote in support of the Senate Resolution opposing the transfer of Mental Health and Addiction Services to the DOH.

Last month, Gov. Chris Christie announced his plan to transfer responsibility for New Jersey's four state psychiatric hospitals, community-based mental health and addiction services, and other behavioral health programs from the Department of Human Services (DHS) to the Department of Health (DOH). HPAE opposes the rush to transfer of services without open hearings that will allow for full and thoughtful review.

We disagree with this plan to move responsibility for mental health and addiction services to the DOH for the following reasons:

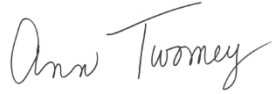
- The DOH has not adequately kept up with hospital issues, including inspections, safety and violence prevention laws, safe staffing issues and especially enforcement issues.
- The failure to enforce DOH's own licensure requirements in the face of repeated violations is a clear indication that DOH is unable or won't handle what they are currently responsible to oversee.
- The lack of regular inspections means a lack of true oversight. Failing to address repeated violations is a problem.
- The DOH has too few staff. The issues of mental health and alcohol, addiction treatment require proper attention, oversight and expertise. It cannot be an "addendum" to an overburdened department.
- DOH is a facility model and DHS is a service model raising concerns that DOH is not equipped to handle the responsibilities of the mental health and addictions departments through their office.

As New Jersey faces a crisis in the number of citizens suffering from opioid addiction any changes to the system without full discussion and a clear plan is irresponsible and will put many lives at risk.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask that you support the senate companion to ACR254 by voting yes.

We thank you for your consideration and anticipated support.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ann Twomey". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Ann Twomey, President