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Rep. Donovan's Bipartisan Mental Health Legislation Passes Assembly

The Mental Health Police Assistance and Crisis Telehealth Act

Madison – Representative Bob Donovan (R-Greenfield) gave a statement following the passage of [Assembly Bill 573](#) which passed unanimously by a voice vote in the Assembly. AB 573 would create a virtual behavioral health pilot program for Wisconsin to provide frontline care to those experiencing a mental health crisis.

“Mental health is an issue that we must improve upon as a state. Luckily, Wisconsin has representation looking for the solutions to this issue,” said Rep. Donovan. “I wish there was one bill to fix all of our issues, but we must continue to slowly chip away at the stigma of mental health while building out our infrastructure.”

AB 573 is a pilot program that will serve as the front line of defense for combatting the mental health crises. This legislation utilizes the experience of the law enforcement and licensed mental health professionals to provide 24/7 telehealth services through the medium of a tablet. South Dakota and Nevada have implemented similar virtual crisis care initiatives and expanded them after initial success. This system of care is supported by evidence as the University of Iowa conducted a [study](#) and concluded that nearly 8 out of 10 individuals remained in place when a virtual crisis care format was deployed.

“I was somewhat skeptical when I originally came across this idea. However, you can't argue with success,” said Rep. Donovan. “This proposal has the ability to combat two issues at once. I believe that is smart governing – simple common sense. Our police are going to continue to interact with mental health crises and it is time to properly equip them.”

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The 84th Assembly District includes the Cities of Greenfield and Milwaukee; and the Villages of Hales Corners and Greendale.