

1 SJR67  
2 184331-1  
3 By Senator Ward  
4 RFD: Rules  
5 First Read: 04-APR-17

8 ENCOURAGING THE REDUCTION OF THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE  
9 WITH MENTAL ILLNESSES IN JAILS.

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11 WHEREAS, counties routinely provide treatment  
12 services to the estimated 2 million people with serious mental  
13 illnesses booked into jail each year; and

14 WHEREAS, prevalence rates of serious mental  
15 illnesses in jails are three to six times higher than for the  
16 general public; and

17 WHEREAS, almost three-quarters of adults with  
18 serious mental illnesses in jails have co-occurring substance  
19 use disorders; and

20 WHEREAS, adults with mental illnesses tend to stay  
21 longer in jail and, upon release, are at a higher risk of  
22 recidivism than people without these disorders; and

23 WHEREAS, county jails spend two to three times more  
24 on adults with mental illnesses that require interventions  
25 compared to those without these treatment needs; and

26 WHEREAS, without the appropriate treatment and  
27 services, people with mental illnesses continue to cycle

1 through the criminal justice system, often resulting in tragic  
2 outcomes for these individuals and their families; and

3                   WHEREAS, all counties throughout the state can take  
4 pride in their responsibility to protect and enhance the  
5 health, welfare, and safety of its residents in efficient and  
6 cost-effective ways; and

7                   WHEREAS, the Legislature of the State of Alabama has  
8 passed legislation, created committees and task forces to  
9 assist with the prison reform effort; and

10                  WHEREAS, the Legislature of the State of Alabama  
11 encourages county partnerships in Alabama through the Stepping  
12 Up initiative, the National Association of Counties, the  
13 Council of State Governments Justice Center, and the American  
14 Psychiatric Association Foundation who are all encouraging  
15 public, private, and nonprofit partners to reduce the number  
16 of people with mental illnesses in jails; now therefore,

17                  BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH  
18 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That we acknowledge April 5, 2017,  
19 as Stepping Up Day in Alabama and we do hereby encourage the  
20 counties throughout Alabama to sign on to the Call to Action  
21 to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in our  
22 county jails, and to commit to sharing lessons learned with  
23 other counties in the state and across the country to support  
24 a national initiative and encourage all county officials,  
25 employees, and residents to participate in the Stepping Up  
26 Initiative.