

In accordance with Article II, Section 17 of the Maryland Constitution, I have today vetoed House Bill 1197.

This bill would repeal the mental health parity legislation enacted during the 1993 Session (Chapter 633 of the Acts of 1993) as well as existing mental health and substance abuse mandates. It would provide for an altered system of health insurance that puts mental health and substance abuse coverage on parity with other types of physical illness.

Senate Bill 756, which was passed by the General Assembly and signed by me on February 28, 1994, accomplishes the same purpose. Therefore, it is not necessary for me to sign House Bill 1197.

Sincerely,
William Donald Schaefer
Governor

House Bill No. 1197

AN ACT concerning

Health Insurance – Mental Illness, Emotional Disorders, Drug Abuse, and Alcohol Abuse

FOR the purpose of repealing certain provisions of law prohibiting certain hospital or major medical contracts or certificates delivered or issued for delivery in the State by insurers, nonprofit health service plans, or health maintenance organizations on a group or individual basis that provide benefits or services for diseases or sickness from discriminating against any person with a mental illness, emotional disorder, or a drug abuse or alcohol abuse disorder; repealing certain provisions of law allowing a waiver of coverage for mental illness under certain circumstances; prohibiting certain hospital or major medical contracts or certificates delivered or issued for delivery in the State by an insurer, a nonprofit health service plan, or a health maintenance organization on a group or individual basis from discriminating against any person with a mental illness, an emotional disorder, or a drug abuse or alcohol abuse disorder by failing to provide coverage for treatment of those illnesses and disorders under the same terms and conditions provided for any other type of health care; providing certain exceptions; repealing certain provisions of law requiring insurers and nonprofit health service plans that propose to issue group hospital policies to offer benefits for the costs of psychiatric care through partial hospitalization; allowing insurers, nonprofit health service plans, and health maintenance organizations to use managed care in delivering services under this Act; requiring certain inpatient, outpatient, and partial hospitalization benefits under certain terms and conditions in certain contracts; defining certain terms; repealing certain statutory termination provisions; providing for the construction and application of this Act; providing for a delayed effective date for certain parts of this Act; making this Act an emergency measure; and generally relating to health insurance coverage for ~~drug abuse, alcohol abuse, and certain mental illness~~ mental illness, emotional disorders, drug abuse, and alcohol abuse.

BY repealing