

INTRODUCED: September 14, 2015

A RESOLUTION No. 2015-R49-61

To express support for the National Alliance on Mental Illness's Stepping Up Initiative to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses residing in jails across the United States.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patrons – All Members of Council

\_\_\_\_\_  
Approved as to form and legality  
by the City Attorney  
\_\_\_\_\_

PUBLIC HEARING: OCT 12 2015 AT 6 P.M.

WHEREAS, the National Alliance on Mental Illness has developed the Stepping Up Initiative to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses residing in jails across the United States; and

WHEREAS, according to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, nationwide, localities routinely provide treatment services to the estimated 2 million people with serious mental illnesses booked into jail each year; and

WHEREAS, the National Alliance on Mental Illness also estimates that prevalence rates of serious mental illnesses in jails are three to six times higher than for the general population; and

AYES:            9            NOES:            0            ABSTAIN: \_\_\_\_\_

ADOPTED:    OCT 12 2015    REJECTED: \_\_\_\_\_    STRICKEN: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

WHEREAS, without the appropriate treatment and services, people with mental illnesses continue to cycle through the criminal justice system, often resulting in tragic outcomes for these individuals and their families; and

WHEREAS, the City of Richmond takes pride in its responsibility to protect and enhance the health, welfare and safety of its residents in efficient and cost-effective ways; and

WHEREAS, according to the 2014 Mental Illness in Jails Report published by the Compensation Board of the Commonwealth of Virginia, as of the month of July, 2014, the Richmond City Jail housed a total of 135 inmates with mental illnesses and, for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2013, and ending June 30, 2014, the City expended a total of \$189,088 in mental health treatment for inmates of the Richmond City Jail; and

WHEREAS, the Council encourages the development of partnerships between the City and other entities to implement programs that help the mentally ill obtain the treatment they need as an alternative to being imprisoned by considering various options for mental health and substance abuse disorder treatment, including a mental health docket in the City's criminal justice system, a mental health alternative sentencing program and a crisis triage center in conjunction with the efforts of agencies and professionals that are instrumental in the criminal

justice system, the General District Court of the City of Richmond, the City's Department of Justice Services, the Richmond Behavioral Health Authority and community treatment resource agencies; and

WHEREAS, through Stepping Up, the National Association of Counties, the Council of State Governments Justice Center and the American Psychiatric Foundation are encouraging public, private and nonprofit partners to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in jails; and

WHEREAS, the Council believes that it is in the best interest of the citizens of the City of Richmond that the Council support the National Alliance on Mental Illness's Stepping Up Initiative to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses residing in jails across the United States;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND:

That the Council hereby supports the National Alliance on Mental Illness's Stepping Up Initiative to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses residing in jails across the United States, including the City's Justice Center, and commits to sharing lessons learned with other localities in the Commonwealth of Virginia and across the country to support a national initiative and encourage all City officials, employees and residents to participate in Stepping Up.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the Council encourages the departments and agencies of the City to utilize the comprehensive resources available through the Stepping Up Initiative to do the following:

1. Convene or draw on a diverse team of leaders and decision makers from multiple agencies committed to safely reducing the number of people with mental illnesses in jails.
2. Collect and review prevalence numbers and assess individuals' needs to better identify adults entering jails with mental illnesses and their recidivism risk, and use that baseline information to guide decision making at the system, program, and case levels.
3. Examine treatment and service capacity to determine which programs and services are available in the city of Richmond for people with mental illnesses and co-occurring substance use disorders, and identify state and local policy and funding barriers to minimizing contact with the justice system and providing treatment and supports in the community.
4. Develop a plan with measurable outcomes that draws on the jail assessment and prevalence data and the examination of available treatment and service capacity, while considering identified barriers.
5. Implement research-based approaches that advance the plan described in item 4 of this resolution.
6. Create a process to track progress using data and information systems, and present reports on successes to the Council and the Mayor.



# Richmond City Council

The Voice of the People

Richmond, Virginia

Lou Brown Ali  
Council Chief of Staff

## Office of the Council Chief of Staff

### Council Ordinance/Resolution Request

**TO** Allen L. Jackson, Richmond City Attorney

**THROUGH** Lou Brown Ali, Council Chief of Staff *lba*

**FROM** Joyce L. Davis, Council Policy Analyst  
Office of the Council Chief of Staff *JLD*

**COPY** Kathy Graziano, 4<sup>th</sup> District Council member  
Haskell Brown, Deputy City Attorney  
Vincent Jones, Deputy Council Chief of Staff  
Tim Grimes, 4<sup>th</sup> District Liaison  
Jennifer Jackson, Senior Legal Secretary

**DATE** August 18, 2015

**PAGE/s** 1 of 4

**TITLE:** Resolution to Support Stepping Up Initiative

RECEIVED

AUG 21 2015

OFFICE OF CITY ATTORNEY

This is a request for the drafting of an/a  Ordinance  Resolution

**REQUESTING COUNCILMEMBER/PATRON**

Council member Kathy Graziano, All members of Council

**SUGGESTED STANDING COMMITTEE**

Education and Human Services

**ORDINANCE/RESOLUTION SUMMARY**

Resolution to Support the Stepping Up Initiative to Reduce the Number of People with Mental Illnesses in United States Jails

**BACKGROUND**

This Resolution is to support the Stepping Up initiative, a national collaboration designed to generate action in communities across the country for a common goal: to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in United States jails. Two million individuals with serious mental illnesses, like schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and major depression, are admitted to jail each year in the U.S., many of whom also have drug and alcohol addictions<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.thenationalcouncil.org/capitol-connector/2015/08/new-legislation-aims-strengthen-mental-health-system-improve-public-safety/>

Stepping Up is a coalition among the National Association of Counties (NACo), the Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center and the American Psychiatric Foundation (APF), with support from the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA). "The initiative seeks to provide localities with direction for developing an action plan to effectively use budgets to facilitate access to behavioral health treatment and promote appropriate alternatives to jail. The goal is to bring together local and state government leaders, law enforcement and mental health communities, and other stakeholders to steer and support systematic, long term strategic efforts to achieve a reduction of the mentally ill jail population". <sup>2</sup>([www.stepuptogether.org](http://www.stepuptogether.org))

The Stepping Up Initiative website encourages "localities to pass a resolution or proclamation committing to key actions, including collecting data to determine the extent of the problem within each jail, developing a plan with a team of diverse stakeholders that draws on sound research, and designing an approach to track progress". Localities passing a resolution are formally recognized as "signing on" to the Call to Action and will be posted on the Stepping Up website with other localities from across the nation. The initiative offers guidance and support to localities including expert direction on collaborative planning and evidence-based practices. Technical assistance will be provided to participants to assist with their efforts, including a series of webinars, exercises and related distance-learning opportunities; peer-to-peer exchanges; and key resources from initiative partners

"The Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services supports this national initiative and has encouraged local Community Service Boards (CSB) in the Commonwealth of Virginia to work with their local partners to join the Stepping Up initiative". <sup>3</sup>([www.dbhds.virginia.gov](http://www.dbhds.virginia.gov))

**The Sample Resolution was provided by the Stepping Up Initiative as a Template for localities ([www.stepuptogether.org](http://www.stepuptogether.org))<sup>4</sup>**

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

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, without the appropriate treatment and services, people with mental illnesses continue to cycle through the criminal justice system, often resulting in

<sup>2</sup> <https://stepuptogether.org/the-problem>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.dbhds.virginia.gov/professionals-and-service-providers/forensic-services/national%20stepping%20up%20initiative>

<sup>4</sup> <https://stepuptogether.org/>

tragic outcomes for these individuals and their families; and

WHEREAS, the City of Richmond and all cities and counties take pride in their responsibility to protect and enhance the health, welfare and safety of its residents in efficient and cost-effective ways; and

WHEREAS, the Richmond City Justice Center has available 39 mental health beds, and has approximately 174 offenders currently being treated for mental health treatment according to a monthly snapshot reported to the Virginia Compensation Board Mental Health Survey for June 2015, with 113 offenders receiving some type of psychotropic medications each month at a cost of approximately \$136,000 each month and approximately \$201,919 total cost spent for mental health services spent each month (excludes medication costs)<sup>5</sup>.

WHEREAS, the City of Richmond has developed collaborative partnerships to provide initiatives to help people stay out of jail offering mental health and substance use disorder treatment to include a mental health docket, a mental health alternative sentencing program and a crisis triage center which are in collaboration with Criminal Justice Stakeholders, the Richmond General District Court, City of Richmond Department of Justice Services, Richmond Behavioral Health Authority and community treatment resource agencies.

WHEREAS, through Stepping Up, the National Association of Counties, the Council of State Governments Justice Center and the American Psychiatric Foundation are encouraging public, private and nonprofit partners to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in jails;

NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED, THAT RICHMOND CITY COUNCIL, do hereby sign on to the Call to Action to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in our city jail, commit to sharing lessons learned with other cities and counties in the Commonwealth of Virginia and across the country to support a national initiative and encourage all city officials, employees and residents to participate in Stepping Up. We resolve to utilize the comprehensive resources available through Stepping Up to:

- Convene or draw on a diverse team of leaders and decision makers from multiple agencies committed to safely reducing the number of people with mental illnesses in jails.
- Collect and review prevalence numbers and assess individuals' needs to better identify adults entering jails with mental illnesses and their recidivism risk, and use that baseline information to guide decision making at the system, program, and case levels.
- Examine treatment and service capacity to determine which programs and services are available in the city for people with mental illnesses and co-occurring substance use disorders, and identify state and local policy and funding barriers to minimizing contact with the justice system and providing treatment and supports in the community.
- Develop a plan with measurable outcomes that draws on the jail assessment and prevalence data and the examination of available treatment and service capacity, while considering identified barriers.

<sup>5</sup> Virginia Compensation Board Mental Health Survey, Virginia Local and Regional Jails Survey

- Implement research-based approaches that advance the plan.
- Create a process to track progress using data and information systems, and to report on successes.

**FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

Fiscal Impact                      Yes  No   
Budget Amendment Required    Yes  No

Attachment/s                      Yes  No

Richmond City Council Ordinance/Resolution Request Form/updated 12.22.08/srs