



Legislation Text

File #: 57414, **Version:** 1

Fiscal Note

No fiscal impact.

Title

Declaring the month of March as African American Mental Health Awareness Month in the City of Madison.

Body

WHEREAS, the City of Madison declares the month of March, as “African American Mental Health Awareness Month”; and,

WHEREAS, in the African American community there is a need to support the recovery process of peers/clients/consumers and family members impacted by stress from racism, mental health and substance use issues through the delivery of culturally responsive, community-defined and honoring services; including but not limited to the incorporation of identified spiritual/faith practices and beliefs when requested; and,

WHEREAS, stress and trauma from racialized disparities in wellness, the economy, environmental stressors, housing, health outcomes and treatments, and the devastating impact of the pandemic, are among the leading causes of health challenges for African Americans in the City of Madison; and,

WHEREAS, scientific studies show that when the identified cultural/spiritual/faith practices of a peer/client/consumer are embraced as a part of the recovery plan, the peer/client/consumer, along with the behavioral health system, experience shorter recovery times, fewer relapses, and fewer hospitalizations; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Madison, in an effort to better reflect and celebrate the diverse population of the City, has demonstrated that there is a need to embrace all residents and visitors to the City of Madison by building collaborations culturally honoring mental health providers and various faith based/spiritual communities and to explore all resources and tools that will enhance mental health wellness in the African American community; and,

WHEREAS, behavioral health providers, peers/clients/consumers, family members, spiritual leaders and other allies of African American/Black individuals living with a mental illness and/or substance use disorder are working hard to support and protect individuals and families by educating communities about mental illness, protecting those impacted by a mental illness from excessive use of force by law enforcement, supporting a mobile crisis unit in the City of Madison and helping to dispel misinformation that ties prejudice, fear and blame to mental illness; and,

WHEREAS, these efforts will reduce stigma and the racialized disparities that exist for everyone unserved, underserved and inappropriately served communities and therefore help to restore mental health wellness, and reimagining safety for all in Dane County,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of Madison proclaims March as “African American Mental Health Awareness Month” and encourages everyone to participate in this important healing process.