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**Representative Christine Hunschofsky's Bill to
Implement Recommendations of the Twentieth
Statewide Grand Jury Passes Florida House**

*Legislation Creates a Mental Health Commission to Recommend Improvements to
Mental Health Services Statewide*

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — Yesterday, [House Bill 1447: Commission on Mental Health and Substance Abuse](#) unanimously passed the Florida House. The bill would implement the recommendations from the Third Interim Report of the 20th Statewide Grand Jury, submitted December 10, 2020, regarding the state's mental health system. The Grand Jury was empaneled after the February 14, 2018 shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland.

The Grand Jury's report highlighted deficiencies in funding, leadership and services related to mental health care throughout Florida and called on legislators, the Governor, and others who make up what they called a patchwork system of mental health service providers to investigate and resolve critical deficiencies in our mental health system. The deficiencies included less funding per capita in Florida than any other state for mental health care, service-related issues as a result of funding deficiencies as well as a lack of interagency cooperation, and leadership issues related to statewide oversight of the many mental health providers and programs.

Representative Hunschofsky stated, "It is time to recognize that this makeshift system with numerous providers and uncoordinated silos needs to be re-evaluated at the highest level. This bill seeks to do just that by creating a working commission that will give us a complete and honest evaluation of our mental health system and provide guidance to fix what is broken and enhance what is working, so that we can deliver mental health and substance abuse services more efficiently and effectively. In the wake of the shooting in Parkland, as Mayor, I saw first-hand how our disjointed mental health service system hindered healing for too many families – I vowed then

to fix that and this bill is a badly needed first step in doing that.”

The bill now goes to the Florida Senate for a vote.

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