

**STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**

**House Committee On Health Care**

**Fiscal:** Fiscal impact issued

**Revenue:** No Revenue Impact

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**Action Date:** 04/20/15

**Action:** Do Pass As Amended, Be Printed Engrossed, And Bill Be Referred To Ways  
And Means.

**Meeting Dates:** 04/03, 04/10, 04/20

**Vote:**

Yeas: 6 - Clem, Greenlick, Kennemer, Keny-Guyer, Lively, Nosse

Nays: 3 - Buehler, Hayden, Weidner

**Prepared By:** Sandy Thiele-Cirka, Committee Administrator

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Creates a 16-member Task Force on Mental Health Care Reimbursement. Specifies membership and directives to the Task Force. Declares an emergency, effective on passage.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Low reimbursement rates and impact on independent practices
- Continued reduction of reimbursement rates
- Increasing needs for counseling
- Low reimbursement rates creating a barrier for mental health services
- Proposed amendments

**EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:**

Replaces original measure.

**BACKGROUND:**

House Bill 2902 (2013) established a 13-member Task Force on Primary and Mental Health Care Reimbursement (Task Force) and was charged with studying and making recommendations for a payment structure for the reimbursement by insurers of licensed physicians, physician assistants and certified nurse practitioners. Additionally, the bill required insurers to reimburse nurse practitioners and physician's assistants at the same rate as physicians for the same services according to the customary and usual fee for physicians in the area served. Although the scope specified mental health providers, the Task Force did not focus on other mental health practitioners (licensed social workers, licensed professional counselors and licensed marriage and family therapists).