

By Representative Harrington

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
 2           An act relating to mental health hospitals;  
 3           amending s. 394.453, F.S.; providing intent  
 4           under the Florida Mental Health Act that the  
 5           state shall maintain and operate mental health  
 6           hospitals, including certain existing ones;  
 7           amending s. 394.457, F.S.; providing that the  
 8           Department of Children and Family Services is  
 9           responsible for the maintenance and operation  
 10          of the state mental hospitals, including  
 11          certain existing ones; providing an effective  
 12          date.

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 14 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 16           Section 1. Section 394.453, Florida Statutes, is  
 17 amended to read:

18           394.453 Legislative intent.--It is the intent of the  
 19 Legislature to authorize and direct the Department of Children  
 20 and Family Services to evaluate, research, plan, and recommend  
 21 to the Governor and the Legislature programs designed to  
 22 reduce the occurrence, severity, duration, and disabling  
 23 aspects of mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders. It is  
 24 the intent of the Legislature that treatment programs for such  
 25 disorders shall include, but not be limited to, comprehensive  
 26 health, social, educational, and rehabilitative services to  
 27 persons requiring intensive short-term and continued treatment  
 28 in order to encourage them to assume responsibility for their  
 29 treatment and recovery. It is intended that such persons be  
 30 provided with emergency service and temporary detention for  
 31 evaluation when required; that they be admitted to treatment

1 facilities on a voluntary basis when extended or continuing  
2 care is needed and unavailable in the community; that  
3 involuntary placement be provided only when expert evaluation  
4 determines that it is necessary; that any involuntary  
5 treatment or examination be accomplished in a setting which is  
6 clinically appropriate and most likely to facilitate the  
7 person's return to the community as soon as possible; and that  
8 individual dignity and human rights be guaranteed to all  
9 persons who are admitted to mental health facilities or who  
10 are being held under s. 394.463. It is the further intent of  
11 the Legislature that the least restrictive means of  
12 intervention be employed based on the individual needs of each  
13 person, within the scope of available services. It is also  
14 the intent of the Legislature that the state shall maintain  
15 and operate mental health hospitals, including, but not  
16 limited to, the Florida State Hospital in Chattahoochee,  
17 Jackson County; the Northeast Florida State Hospital in  
18 Macclenny, Baker County; and the G. Pierce Wood Memorial  
19 Hospital in Arcadia, DeSoto County.

20 Section 2. Paragraph (c) is added to subsection (2) of  
21 section 394.457, Florida Statutes, to read:

22 394.457 Operation and administration.--

23 (2) RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT.--The  
24 department is responsible for:

25 (c) The maintenance and operation of state mental  
26 hospitals, including, but not limited to, the Florida State  
27 Hospital in Chattahoochee, Jackson County; the Northeast  
28 Florida State Hospital in Macclenny, Baker County; and the G.  
29 Pierce Wood Memorial Hospital in Arcadia, DeSoto County.

30 Section 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a  
31 law.

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HOUSE SUMMARY

Revises the Florida Mental Health Act to include intent that the state shall maintain and operate mental health hospitals and to provide that the Department of Children and Family Services shall be responsible for the maintenance and operation of the state mental hospitals, including, specifically, the Florida State Hospital in Chattahoochee, Jackson County; the Northeast Florida State Hospital in Macclenny, Baker County; and the G. Pierce Wood Memorial Hospital in Arcadia, DeSoto County.