



Legislation Text

File #: 2022-2490, Version: 1

Public Hearing: YES NO **Department:** Board of Commissioners - District 6

SUBJECT:

Commission District(s): All Commission Districts

To Amend the Healthcare Safety Net portion of the CEO's ARP Budget to Continue the Objective to Better and Holistically Address the Needs of The Greater DeKalb

Information Contact: Commissioner Ted Terry

Phone Number: 404-371-4909

PURPOSE:

DeKalb County has received \$73,742,270.50 from the second tranche of ARP Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds. This agenda item amends the Healthcare Safety Net portion of the CEO's ARP budget from \$3M to \$6M, increase support to public health related post-pandemic initiatives from \$2M to \$6M to expand a county-wide health support system, and mental health mitigation of \$1.6M over 4 years to total \$8.5M, and \$1.7M to secure Public Benefits Navigators for each district for continuing the objective to better and holistically address the needs of the greater DeKalb by supporting the ongoing mental health and public health through strengthening the Health Safety Net.

NEED/IMPACT:

COVID has pushed health to the forefront for 2.5 years. Saving lives has been a number one effort. DeKalb County's collaborative efforts to vaccinate have resulted in being one of the highest in Georgia. We see how these collaborative efforts have made a difference. We have also realized the importance of proactive intervention and how it can help mitigate long-term health issues. The closure of the Atlanta Medical Center is a crisis. There is an "all hands-on deck" now to ease the overburden for Grady Memorial Hospital and this provides an opportunity to institute a foundation for supporting both ongoing public and mental health by strengthening DeKalb County's Health Safety Nets.

Besides vaccinations and screening, we must also address mental health. Increasing number of individuals with mental health and substance use conditions in the criminal justice system continues enormous fiscal, health, and human costs. The COVID pandemic exasperated an already fragile system that continues to reiterate that citizens are not safe from themselves or others. The DeKalb Crisis Center is the other emergency room, and our jail should not be utilized as one. In order to reduce involvement, support those who need services, and promote fairness throughout the criminal justice system, leaders in the mental health system, advocates, legislators, and others in the criminal justice system must come together to support a system that will improve outcomes for all.

FISCAL IMPACT:

No impact to the County or taxpayers

RECOMMENDATION:

To approve to amend the CEO's Health Safety Net portion of the ARP budget and authorize the Chief Executive Officer to execute all necessary documents.