

Dear Governor Bryant,

It is no secret that the state of Mississippi has had to make difficult budgetary decisions this legislative session. We understand that there are sacrifices that all Mississippians are called to make, and no one is more aware of this reality than the men and women who work in the field of mental health.

Speak with any of Mississippi's hard working mental health workers, and they will acknowledge that they have stretched to make things work. However, this recent round of cuts has simply gone too far. Mississippi is in serious danger of losing its matching federal funds for services. We are in crisis; there is no other word to describe it.

With the loss of matching funds will come even more consequential cuts to necessary services. People in need of rehabilitation and medical care will instead end up in prison, where they will not receive treatment, but become an additional burden on the taxpayers of Mississippi. These cuts will undoubtedly lead to significantly more costs—economic and human-- in the very near future.

Accordingly, we, the undersigned members of the Mississippi legislature, feel compelled to ask you to call a special session for the purpose of finding additional funding to deal with this crisis.

Sincerely,

Ed LeGrand  
*Former Executive Director  
MS Dept. of Mental Health*

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*Senate Minority Leader*

David Baria, District 122  
*House Minority Leader*

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*Legislative Black Caucus Chair*

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