

NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
1973 SESSION

CHAPTER 455
HOUSE BILL 813

AN ACT TO GIVE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS THE ELECTION TO
SERVE AS THE AREA MENTAL HEALTH BOARD IN ONE COUNTY AREA
MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1. G.S. 122-35.20 as the same appears in the 1971 Cumulative Supplement to Volume 3B of the General Statutes is hereby amended and rewritten to read as follows:

"§ 122-35.20. **Area mental health boards.** — (a) In areas where area mental health programs are established in accordance with this Article, an area mental health board shall be appointed for each designated area. The area mental health board shall meet at least six times per year and, if appointed, shall consist of 15 members.

(b) In areas consisting of only one county with a population of 325,000 or more, the board of county commissioners may serve as the area mental health board, or they shall appoint all the members of the area mental health board. In areas consisting of more than one county and in areas consisting of only one county where the population is less than 325,000, each board of county commissioners within the area shall appoint one commissioner as a member of the area mental health board. These members shall appoint the other members of the area mental health board in such a manner as to provide equitable area- wide representation.

(c) The area mental health board, if appointed, shall include:

- (1) At least one commissioner from each county;
- (2) At least two persons duly licensed to practice medicine in North Carolina;
- (3) At least one representative from the professional fields of psychology, or social work, or nursing, or religion;
- (4) At least three representatives from local citizen organizations active in mental health, or in mental retardation, or in alcoholism, or in drug dependence;
- (5) At least one representative from local hospitals or area planning organizations;
- (6) At least one attorney practicing in North Carolina.

(d) Any member of an area mental health board who is a public official shall be deemed to be serving on the board in an ex officio capacity to his public office. The ex officio members shall serve to the end of their respective terms as public officials. The other members, if any, shall serve four-year terms, except that upon initial formation of an area mental health board, three members shall be appointed for one year, two members for two years, three members for three years, and all remaining members for four years.

(e) Subject to the supervision, direction, and control of the State Board of Mental Health, the area mental health board shall be responsible for reviewing and evaluating the area needs and programs in mental health, mental impairment, mental retardation, alcoholism, drug dependence, and related fields, and for developing jointly with the State Department of Mental Health an annual plan for the effective development, use and control of State and local facilities and resources in a comprehensive program of mental health services for the residents of the area.

Sec. 2. This act shall become effective upon ratification.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified, this the 11th day of May,
1973.