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Emergence Health Network Proposes Two Bills Passed by the Texas Legislature to Help Individuals with

Mental Health and IDD Diagnosis

**(El Paso, TX June 2017)** Emergence Health Network would like to thank Senator Jose Rodriguez and Representative Joe Moody for their support of Senate Bill 1533 and Senate Bill 2027. “EHN proposed the two bills which we believe will ultimately help to better serve those in our community with a mental health or IDD (intellectual/developmental disability) diagnosis. The support of our delegation to get these bills authored and passed to the governor’s desk is a big accomplishment for El Paso residents and those in communities across Texas,” said Kristi Daugherty, CEO Emergence Health Network.

SB 1533 helps expand the reach of Mental Health First Aid Training (MHFA) to now include university employees. “Prior to SB 1533, MHFA training was free to area teachers, school counselors, nurses, school bus drivers and administrators such as principals. However, now college employees can sign up for the free training that teaches how to recognize when students or staff may be having a hard time coping with a situation and be in the midst of a crisis,” added Daugherty. “MHFA is also helpful when dealing with the lack of acceptance or stigma people can feel when it comes to seeking treatment for a mental illness.”

SB 2027 is designed to improve employment opportunities for individuals with an intellectual/developmental disability. “This bill calls upon the Texas Workforce Commission and Health and Human Services Commission to study vocational training opportunities for IDD consumers. Many of the IDD consumers who we serve are very capable young adults who want to be independent, who want to work and be productive residents in our community. We just need to identify these opportunities and improve the strategies to get them there. SB 2027 is a step in that direction,” said Daugherty.

As the Local Mental Health Authority in El Paso, EHN has been providing quality behavioral health care and IDD services in El Paso more than 50 years.