

SENATE RESOLUTION
1991-8680

By Senators West, Johnson, von Reichbauer and Roach

WHEREAS, State employees who work at Eastern and Western State Hospitals perform essential services in caring for the mentally ill; and

WHEREAS, The number of assaults on staff by residents has reached alarming rates, and resulted in over four thousand days of time-loss during 1989, the most recent year for which complete data is available; and

WHEREAS, Assaults on staff contribute to low employee morale, lost productivity, the loss of tax dollars, and an environment that is not conducive to the care and treatment of the mentally ill; and

WHEREAS, Local law enforcement and prosecutors are unwilling to file criminal charges against offenders, often despite repeated offenses by repeat offenders;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Senate Health and Long-Term Care Committee study the problems and causes associated with assaults on state employees who work at Western and Eastern State Hospitals and investigate and recommend to the 1992 Legislature a course of action aimed at reducing such assaults through increased staffing levels, increased employee training, physical plant improvements, stronger assault statutes, or other criminal justice initiatives or any other recommendation the committee deems appropriate.

In their study of this problem the committee shall consult with state employees and their representatives; department and hospital management; advocates for the mentally ill; officials of the state's criminal justice system, including local law enforcement and prosecutors; and others with an interest in this issue.