EXPANDS ACCESS TO ASSISTED OUTPATIENT TREATMENT

HB1773 makes some fixes to the Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) law, which ensures a continuity of care by easing the process to access less restrictive treatment alternative before involuntary hospitalization.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT TO NAMI WASHINGTON MEMBERS?

- It addresses a broken behavioral health system and its reliance on jails and prisons to assist individuals with severe behavioral health issues.
- The lack of funding for less restrictive treatment alternatives have been a challenge for individuals seeking an Assisted Outpatient Treatment option and this bill adds funding for treatment services and court oversight costs.
- This bill fills a critical gap by increasing access to outpatient services for individuals with mental health issues who encounter the civil court system.
- Assisted Outpatient Treatment is a nationally tested and evidence-based model and HB1773 follows the research and evidence from other states, which have successfully implemented AOT and reduced in-patient hospitalizations and helped many individuals stay in effective treatment programs, helping their long-term recovery.

WHAT WILL THIS BILL DO?

- Allows Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) to be used before individuals meet the extremely high bar of the Involuntary Treatment Act. AOT offers a middle solution both before hospitalization, and after to allow for earlier and more responsive care.
- Provides proper funding for less restrictive alternative treatment and court oversight.
- Broadens the range of people who can petition for AOT. This is specifically important in areas of the state where they don’t have the funding for Designated Crisis Responders.
- Strengthens the rights of individuals being considered for involuntarily treatment.


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