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To: The Honorable Delores G. Kelley  
Chair, Finance Committee

From: The Office of the Attorney General

Re: House Bill 108 (Behavioral Health Crisis Response Services – Modifications):  
Support

The Office of the Attorney General supports Senate Bill 286 which would further the goals of the Attorney General's COVID-19 Access to Justice Task Force. This bill would provide funding for the Behavioral Health Crisis Response System for fiscal years 2023 through 2025, with at least one third of the funding to be spent on local mobile crisis teams that operate 24/7 to provide assessments, crisis intervention, stabilization, follow-up and referral to behavioral health services. The bill prioritizes limiting interaction of law enforcement with individuals in crisis and serving all members of local communities with cultural competency and appropriate language access. The statewide crisis response system provides skilled clinical intervention to help prevent suicides, homicides, unnecessary hospitalizations, and arrests or detention, and to reduce dangerous or threatening situations involving individuals in need of behavioral health services. These proposed changes promise to reduce risks inherent in behavioral health crises for the individuals, law enforcement and their communities.

We urge the Committee to give Senate Bill 286 a favorable report.

cc: Sponsor