

**Statement of Congressman Gary G. Miller**  
**H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act**  
**March 5, 2008**

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Madam Speaker, I rise in reluctant opposition to H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act. To be clear, I support mental health parity and I commend my colleagues for coming together to ensure Americans can receive the care that is necessary; however, I have serious concerns about extraneous provisions that were added to the bill at the last minute.

This legislation, while seeking to increase access to mental health treatment, simultaneously raises the cost of doing business for companies who choose to provide low cost medication to the Medicaid program. In addition, the bill stifles the growth of certain specialty hospitals in an effort to bring more business to public hospitals. In a time when we should be encouraging the expansion of all types of medical care, we should not be punishing one part of the industry in order to pay for the expansion of another.

Providing access to quality mental health care is an important goal. Yet, I believe this goal can be achieved without harming unrelated aspects of the medical field, which is why I oppose H.R. 1424 and I support S. 558. If the House had brought up S.558, which does include any of these problematic provisions, we could well be on our way to expanding mental health parity. I encourage the House to move forward with the Senate version so we can send this bill to the President as soon as possible.