## Region II Mental Health Board

January 15, 2012

Honorable Idaho State Legislators,

Mental Illness and Substance Abuse (Behavioral Health) significantly impact families, communities, hospitals, county jails, courts, and state prisons. Behavioral Health refers to treatment needed for both mental illness and substance abuse. Since cuts in services in the 2012 fiscal year budget, admissions to hospitals, jails, courts and prisons have grown substantially. (eg. The cost in one of the hospitals within our Region for the last two years of indigent emergency room care related to mental health crises and substance abuse care has risen from \$672,296 in 2010 to \$877,190 in 2011).

The Region II Mental Health Board seeks to provide an accurate picture of the needs and gaps in behavioral health. The survey documents a <u>significant increase</u> in suicide attempts, mental health holds and transports which is diverting police from their usual work.

The Board has proactively <u>conducted a survey</u> of regional agencies serving individuals with behavioral health needs for your review. The Board conducted the original survey last year reacting to budget cuts. This survey serves as a follow-up from last year and illustrates current conditions in our region.

The Board sees the effects of recent budget cuts and the resulting reduction of services as regressive. Attached is the executive summary of the survey. Region II Mental Health Board seeks to be <u>part of the solution</u> in addressing, monitoring, and serving the mentally ill and substance abuse clients who are in need.

Additionally, <u>Behavioral Health Transformation legislation</u> will be introduced this session. It is designed to be more cost effective and responsive to the continuum of care for those in need. This legislation has taken over 5 yrs to develop.

As most of you know, Mental Illness and Substance Abuse, left untreated, results in preventable tragedy and trauma for families, communities and local governments. <u>Assessment and Treatment work.</u> Please take a few moments to review the survey summary. Contact me or any Reg. II Board member if you have any questions or comments.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jim Rehder, Chair

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