A BILL FOR AN ACT

CONCERNING CONTINUATION OF THE YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES PROGRAM, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at http://leg.colorado.gov.)

The temporary youth mental health services program (program), commonly known as "I Matter", is scheduled to repeal on June 30, 2024. The bill continues the program indefinitely.

Under existing law, the selection of a vendor to create or use an existing online portal to facilitate the program (program vendor) is...
exempt from the requirements of the state's procurement code. The bill repeals the exemption.

Existing law requires the state department of human services to report to the general assembly about the program twice each year. The bill requires one annual report, due June 30 of each year.

The bill requires the behavioral health administration (BHA) to annually evaluate the efficacy of the program. The bill requires the BHA to conduct surveys of youth and providers who participate in the program and collect data from providers and the program vendor for the annual evaluation.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 27-60-109, amend (1)(b), (2)(a), and (5); repeal (4)(b) and (6); and add (1)(f) and (4.5) as follows:

27-60-109. Youth mental health services program - established - report - rules - definitions. (1) As used in this section, unless the context otherwise requires:

(b) "Program" means the temporary youth mental health services program established in this section.

(f) "YOUTH PARTICIPANT" MEANS A YOUTH WHO PARTICIPATES IN A MENTAL HEALTH SESSION THAT IS REIMBURSED PURSUANT TO THE PROGRAM.

(2)(a) There is established in the behavioral health administration the temporary youth mental health services program to facilitate access to mental health services, including substance use disorder services, for youth to respond to mental health needs identified in an initial mental health screening through the portal. including those needs that may have resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic. The program reimburses providers for up to three mental health sessions with a youth.

(4)(b) The selection of a vendor pursuant to this subsection (4) is
exempt from the requirements of the procurement code, articles 101 to
112 of title 24.

4.5 (a) On or before June 1 of each year, the vendor
described in subsection (4) of this section shall deliver to the
BHA any of the following, collected during the prior year:
(I) Information about the program collected from
surveys of youth participants, parents, and providers; and
(II) Data from evaluations conducted by the vendor
about the efficacy of the program, including whether the
program is serving the mental health needs of youth
participants. __

(b) The BHA shall conduct a survey of each provider who
participates in the program that solicits feedback about the
following:
(I) The met and unmet mental health needs of the youth
participants who engaged in treatment with the provider;
(II) Whether the provider made referrals for youth
participants for additional services beyond what is provided
pursuant to the program; and
(III) Any other elements of the program.

(c) This subsection (4.5) does not authorize the BHA, a
provider, a vendor, or any other person to violate applicable
federal or state patient privacy laws.

5 (a) On or before January 1 of each year, and on or before June
30 of each year, the state department shall report to the house of
representatives public and behavioral health and human services
committee and the senate health and human services committee, or their
successor committees, regarding the number of youth who received services under the program, excluding any personally identifiable information in accordance with state and federal law; information in aggregate about the services provided to youth under the program; and other relevant information regarding the program; AND THE INFORMATION REPORTED TO THE BHA BY THE VENDOR PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (4.5) OF THIS SECTION.

(6) This section is repealed, effective June 30, 2024 June 30, 2034.

SECTION 2. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 27-50-105, amend (1)(g) as follows:

27-50-105. Administration of behavioral health programs - state plan - sole mental health authority - gifts, grants, or donations. (1) The BHA shall administer and provide the following behavioral health programs and services:

(g) The temporary youth mental health services program created pursuant to section 27-60-109;

SECTION 3. Appropriation. For the 2024-25 state fiscal year, $5,000,000 is appropriated to the department of human services for use by the behavioral health administration. This appropriation is from the general fund and is based on an assumption that the administration will require an additional 1.0 FTE. To implement this act, the administration may use this appropriation for the youth mental health services program.

SECTION 4. Safety clause. The general assembly finds, determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety or for appropriations for
the support and maintenance of the departments of the state and state institutions.