

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 1779

A RESOLUTION commemorating Osawatomie State Hospital's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

WHEREAS, On January 14, 1863, during his inaugural address to the Kansas Legislature, Governor Thomas Carney referred to article VII, section 1 of the constitution of the state of Kansas, which encourages the establishment of benevolent institutions for the mentally ill. Governor Carney challenged the legislators, stating, "This appeals directly to you and, as you are able, you will respond to the appeal. The state which cares best for these unfortunates is always the truest in council and the noblest in action"; and

WHEREAS, The Kansas Legislature passed an act on February 29, 1863, that chose Osawatomie, a town held in high esteem by abolitionist leaders, as the location for the first of these benevolent institutions; and

WHEREAS, The treatment and rehabilitation of the mentally ill in Kansas began nearly 150 years ago, on November 5, 1866, when the first patient was admitted to a simple farmhouse, near Osawatomie, Kansas, that served as the state's first public mental hospital; and

WHEREAS, Dr. C. O. Gause, a Quaker physician, served as the first superintendent of the Osawatomie State Hospital. In a time when many of the causes of mental illnesses were unknown and mentally ill individuals were often treated with merciless cruelty, Dr. Gause fervently believed that the mentally ill could be cured and approached his patients with a sympathetic and humanitarian outlook; and

WHEREAS, By 1912, the Osawatomie State Hospital sprawled over 1,003 acres of land and was composed of numerous stately buildings that could serve more than 1,000 patients; and

WHEREAS, Throughout the 150 years of the Osawatomie State Hospital's history, the interest or apathy of Kansas citizens has been reflected in the good and bad cycles of the hospital's care; and

WHEREAS, In 1948, Kansas citizens became angered over reports of widespread neglect and brutality towards the Osawatomie State Hospital's patients and the deplorable conditions of the hospital's facilities. The people of Kansas, through their elected legislators, demonstrated that they wanted state hospitals that could provide humane conditions and effective modern treatments. The governor and legislature quickly initiated a reform plan, and new training programs were established. Kansas went from 47<sup>th</sup> among the then 48 states to first place, in the nation, in mental health facilities and treatment; and

WHEREAS, With the help of its able and dedicated staff, Osawatomie State Hospital continues to provide its vital services to adults diagnosed with psychiatric disorders, regardless of their legal status or ability to pay. The hospital currently serves individuals from 36 counties in Kansas in collaboration with 12 Community Mental Health Centers: Now, therefore,

*Be it resolved by the Senate of the State of Kansas:* That we commemorate the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Osawatomie State Hospital and support its continuing mission to provide a safety net of mental health services for Kansans; and

*Be it further resolved:* That the Secretary of the Senate shall send three enrolled copies of this resolution to Senator Tyson.

Senate Resolution No. 1779 was sponsored by Senators Tyson, Baumgardner, Bowers, Denning, Fitzgerald, Francisco, Hawk, Hensley, Holmes, Kelly, King, Longbine, McGinn, Ostmeyer, Petersen, Pettey, Pyle, V. Schmidt and Wilborn.

I hereby certify that the above RESOLUTION originated in the SENATE, and was adopted by that body

---

*President of the Senate.*

---

*Secretary of the Senate.*