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Jim Perdue, commissioner of the Alabama Department of Mental Health, spoke to the Health and Human Services committee of the Pike County Chamber of Commerce on Wednesday about how cutting federal regulations could help the department.



By [Jacob Holmes](#)

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GOOD NEWS: Perdue says Trump's regulation cuts could benefit mental health effort

Published 3:00am Thursday, February 2, 2017

President Donald Trump's regulation cuts could help the Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH), ADMH Commissioner Jim Perdue said Wednesday.

Perdue was the guest speaker on Wednesday to about 50 members of the Health and Human Services Committee of the Pike County Chamber of Commerce.

"There can only be 16 beds to a unit," Perdue said. "Who came up with that number? Why not 24? You're looking at a 50 percent increase in delivery without really increasing the cost.

"Group homes can have no more than three people right now and it takes eight people to manage care," Perdue said. "If we could have five people in a group home, we could do more with our money."

The ACLU in Montgomery has filed several lawsuits against the department in recent months due to long waits for prisoners and the department not providing testing that is required for recipients of Medicare funding.

Perdue, a former Crenshaw County probate judge hired to be the commissioner in July of 2015, said that his plan is to take the unused property that the department owns and make another hospital so everyone can be accommodated.

"We have 6,000 acres of land just in Tuscaloosa," Perdue said. "The University Mall is owned by the Department of Mental Health."

Perdue explained that the department's unused land comes from long ago when many people didn't have much to give.

"Back then, the only thing people had of value was land," Perdue said.

Perdue said less regulation would help to keep the department from having the federal government step in.

“I think less regulation will be a positive,” Perdue said. “I think there’s an overreach of regulation ... We need to respond to our issues on our own instead of having the federal government coming in and telling us what we have to do.”

Perdue said consistency will be important to keep the department moving in the right direction.

“We’ve had five commissioners in the last 10 years,” Perdue said. “You can’t keep moving in a positive direction if you keep changing directions.”

The Health and Human Services Committee brings together Pike County health care leaders to discuss health issues, problems, and solutions in Pike County. The committee hosts quarterly health luncheons and helps provide health education and training programs. The Health and Human Services Committee also informs Pike Hospitality citizens on health issues and concerns.

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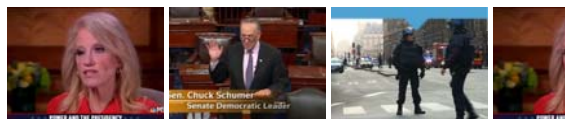
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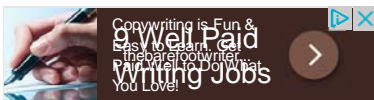
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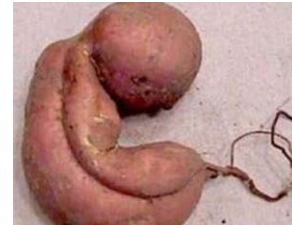
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