



C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER  
GOVERNOR

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **GOVERNOR APPLAUDS LEGISLATURE'S FUNDING OF A SECOND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CRISIS CENTER**

(BOISE) – Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter signed legislation today to pay for a second regional behavioral health crisis center, this time in northern Idaho.

It is the second straight year that the Idaho Legislature has agreed to provide funding for a regional center to treat individuals experiencing mental health or substance abuse crises. The first such facility opened in Idaho Falls last December. Governor Otter's goal is eventually to establish crisis centers in each of Idaho's seven Health and Welfare regions.

"As I said in my State of the State address in January, this is part of a sustainable, long-term commitment to helping our communities better address the financial and public safety challenges posed by drug and alcohol abuse or individuals' mental health problems," Governor Otter said. "I'm grateful to the Legislature for recognizing as I have that it is less expensive and does more good when citizens experiencing these crises have somewhere to go other than our hospital emergency rooms or local jail cells."

A total of \$1.72 million for a new crisis center was included in House Bill 264, an appropriations bill for the Division of Behavioral Health Services at the Department of Health and Welfare. It was approved unanimously by the Senate and passed the House 58-9 before going to the Governor's desk, where it was signed today.

"We know that providing these services is costly. But in the long run it costs much more to lock people up or warehouse them somewhere when life's challenges become overwhelming," Governor Otter said. "Our goal is to address these crises as close to home as possible and restore our neighbors, our friends and our family members to their full, productive potential."

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