



# NEWS RELEASE

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## LOUISIANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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### **Rep. Hodges to host and participate in One Mind Symposium**

As a member of The Capital Region Mental Health Team, State Representative Valarie Hodges, R-Denham Springs, will participate in the One Mind Symposium, held Wednesday, August 23 at the Renaissance Hotel in Baton Rouge. The Capital Region Mental Health Team was chosen as hosts from teams all across the US, and will work with The International Association of Chiefs of Police, and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to host this interactive symposium. The event is limited to 100 professionals who actively interact with the mentally ill population in their community, and is meant to encourage regional law enforcement and behavioral health agencies to participate in the One Mind Campaign, a campaign designed to improve police response to persons affected by mental illness.

Rep. Hodges said, "This symposium will provide the opportunity for law enforcement and government officials to come together with professionals in the area of behavioral health to discuss the best possible ways of handling mental health issues that may arise. Individuals affected by mental illness deserve our support and protection, which is why it is vital that we work together to properly address such issues before they occur."

The Capital Region Mental Health Team includes Rep. Hodges, Dr. James Hussey from the Assistant Secretary Office of Behavioral Health of the Louisiana Department of Health, Thomas Jarlock from DHH, SSgt Patrick Bedwell from the Livingston Parish Sheriff's Office, and Lawrence E. Callender, Assistant Chief of the French Settlement Police Department. The team will host a 1 day, 8-hour course of Mental Health First Aid the Thursday following the symposium, August 24, beginning at 9:00 a.m. The course will provide an overview of a wide array of mental health issues, warning signs and de-escalation tactics, all geared toward first responders and law enforcement officers.

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