

By: Senator(s) Kirby

To: Insurance

SENATE BILL NO. 2939

1 AN ACT TO REQUIRE CERTAIN INSURANCE POLICIES AND PLANS TO
2 OFFER ON AN OPTIONAL BASIS MEDICAL BENEFITS FOR DISORDERS WHICH
3 ARE WITHIN THE LAWFUL SCOPE OF PRACTICE OF LICENSED MARRIAGE AND
4 FAMILY THERAPISTS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

6 **SECTION 1.** Every hospital, health or medical expenses
7 insurance policy, hospital or medical service contract, health
8 maintenance organization and preferred provider organization that
9 is delivered or issued for delivery in this state shall offer
10 benefits for diagnosis and treatment of mental, nervous or
11 emotional disorders which are within the lawful scope of practice
12 of a duly licensed marriage and family therapist as defined in
13 Section 73-54-5. This coverage shall be offered on an optional
14 basis, and each primary insured must accept or reject such
15 coverage in writing and accept responsibility for premium payment.

16 The benefit provided by this coverage shall be subject to the
17 same annual deductibles or coinsurance established for all other
18 covered benefits within a given policy, plan or contract. Private
19 third party payers may not reduce or eliminate coverage due to
20 these requirements.

21 A duly licensed marriage and family therapist shall be
22 entitled to participate in such policies, plans or contracts
23 providing for the diagnosis and treatment of mental, nervous or
24 emotional disorders only as authorized by Section 73-54-5 et seq.

25 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
26 and after July 1, 2005.