

**\*\*\*MEDIA ALERT\*\*\*MEDIA ALERT\*\*\***

**December 1, 2009**

***SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH CAUCUS TO  
HOLD MEETING***

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Caucus will hold a meeting on ***DECEMBER 3 at 10AM in HOUSE COMMITTEE ROOM 3 in the STATE CAPITOL.*** Department of Health and Hospital Deputy Secretary Tony Keck will give updates on the Behavioral Health Act of 2008 and Nicola's Law, give the forecast of the 2010 Office of Mental Health Budget, and discuss pending legislation the department is considering for the 2010 session.

Approximately ten million Americans have co-occurring addictive and mental disorders. The combined indirect and related social costs of these conditions are estimated to total at least \$113 billion dollars annually. Louisiana ranks thirty-fifth among states in the number of lives lost each year to suicide and an estimated eighty percent of the youth entering the juvenile justice system have a mental disorder. The Substance and Abuse Mental Health Caucus was created during the 2008 Legislative session in an effort to find solutions these social issues. Its mission is to provide a venue for legislators to learn about important substance abuse and mental health issues affecting the citizens of Louisiana and stress the importance of finding solutions that bridge unmet needs, improve the quality of and use of evidence-based practices, and improve communities.

**SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH CAUCUS  
MEETING**

**10 am**

**DECEMBER 3, 2009**

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ROOM 3  
LOUISIANA STATE CAPITOL**

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