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Idaho Senate unanimously passes crisis center funding

BOISE — Funding for a Canyon County mental health crisis center passed unanimously in the Idaho Senate on Wednesday, sending it to the governor's desk for signature.

Last month, members of the Joint-Finance Appropriations Committee unanimously recommended to appropriate the \$2.6 million needed to fund the three remaining behavioral health treatment centers in Canyon County, Pocatello, and Lewiston. Crisis centers are designed as a treatment option for adults experiencing serious mental health issues who would otherwise be arrested or taken to an emergency room.

The locations receiving the one-time funds were previously identified by the Department of Health and Welfare.

Each center gets \$200,000 in one-time startup costs, then \$1.5 million for two years to cover operations. After that, the center has to come up with a plan to reduce state funding by half and become more self-sustaining.

The Region 3 crisis center — which will be located in the Nampa and Caldwell area — will also serve Adams, Gem, Owyhee, Payette and Washington counties.

If approved, funds will go into effect July 1. The center is tentatively planned to open December 2018 after the selection of a location and a behavioral health service provider.

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