

2017 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 110

BY REPRESENTATIVE LEGER

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Institute for Public Health and Justice and the Department of Public Safety and Corrections to study the impact of behavioral health issues, including mental illnesses, substance abuse disorders, and developmental disabilities, in the criminal justice system.

WHEREAS, studies have shown that people who suffer from mental illnesses, substance abuse disorders, and developmental disabilities are more likely to enter into the criminal justice system when they are not given timely access to quality behavioral health services in their communities; and

WHEREAS, national studies indicate that the rates of mental illness are consistently higher in the criminal justice system; and

WHEREAS, pretrial inmates represent the largest and fastest growing segment of the United States jail population, and nearly one in five of these inmates suffers from a mental illness; and

WHEREAS, the number of adults served by Louisiana community behavioral health programs was reduced by half between 2012 and 2015; and

WHEREAS, between 2012 and 2015, the number of adults served in Louisiana psychiatric hospitals dropped to thirty-six percent; and

WHEREAS, thirteen percent of inmates housed in Louisiana state operated prisons are diagnosed with a serious mental illness; and

WHEREAS, it is important to understand the needs of Louisiana residents who suffer from serious mental illnesses and substance abuse disorders, to assess the ability of the state's health system to effectively meet the needs of Louisiana residents, and to better understand the impact of untreated mental illnesses and substance abuse disorders; and

WHEREAS, the state of Louisiana recognizes that an effective criminal justice system should be based on public safety, accountability, and rehabilitation.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Institute for Public Health and Justice and the Department of Public Safety and Corrections to study the impact of behavioral health issues in the criminal justice system.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, in this regard, the Institute for Public Health and Justice and the Department of Public Safety and Corrections may work with and receive information from various stakeholders in the criminal justice system and behavioral health systems, including but not limited to representatives from the Department of Health, office of behavioral health, the Mental Health Advocacy Service, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the Louisiana District Judges Association, the Louisiana District Attorneys Association, the Louisiana Public Defender Board, the Louisiana Sheriff's Association, the Louisiana Association of Chiefs of Police, the Louisiana Licensed Professional Counselors Board of Examiners, the Louisiana Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, the Louisiana Counseling Association, the Department of Education, the Department of Health, the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists, the Louisiana Psychological Association, the Louisiana Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, the Louisiana Association of Clinical Social Workers, the Louisiana Hospital Association, and the Louisiana Human Service District/Authority.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Institute for Public Health and Justice and the Department of Public Safety and Corrections may also study relevant case law to better understand the impact of behavioral health problems in the criminal justice system.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that suitable copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Institute for Public Health and Justice and the Department of Public Safety and Corrections.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE