

Regular Session, 2014

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 26

BY REPRESENTATIVE HENRY BURNS

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Louisiana State Law Institute to study and make recommendations concerning gun ownership rights of persons who have attempted suicide and to report its findings to the legislative committees on health and welfare and criminal justice.

WHEREAS, suicide is a pervasive public health problem in the United States; and

WHEREAS, in our nation, twice as many lives are lost annually to suicide than to homicide; and

WHEREAS, the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention published in 2012 by the United States Surgeon General's Office in conjunction with the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention highlights the following facts and statistics concerning suicide:

(1) On average, over thirty-three thousand Americans died each year as a result of suicide between 2001 and 2009, which equates to roughly one life lost to suicide every fifteen minutes.

(2) Over the one-year period prior to publication of National Strategy for Suicide Prevention, more than eight million adults reported having serious thoughts of suicide, two million five hundred thousand adults reported making a suicide plan, and one million one hundred thousand adults reported making a suicide attempt.

(3) Nearly sixteen percent of students in grades nine to twelve report having seriously considered suicide, and nearly eight percent of students in these grades report having attempted suicide one or more times in the past twelve months; and

WHEREAS, beyond the recommended approaches to prevention set forth in the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention, an emerging prevention strategy focuses on firearms access; and

WHEREAS, the prominent suicide prevention initiative of the Harvard School of Public Health known as "Means Matter" asserts that access to a firearm is a risk factor for suicide; and

WHEREAS, because firearm ownership rights encompass complex and highly nuanced legal issues, any prospective restriction on such rights merits careful and deliberate study; and

WHEREAS, R.S. 24:204 provides that among the purposes of the Louisiana State Law Institute are securing the better administration of justice, conducting scholarly legal research and scientific legal work, and promotion of better adaptation of Louisiana law to present social needs.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Louisiana State Law Institute to study and make recommendations concerning gun ownership rights of persons who have attempted suicide and to report its findings to the House Committee on Health and Welfare, the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare, the House Committee on the Administration of Criminal Justice, and the Senate Committee on Judiciary B on or before February 1, 2015.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in developing its study and recommendations, the Louisiana State Law Institute may engage, collaborate with, and obtain information and perspective from stakeholder groups with an interest in suicide prevention.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the director of the Louisiana State Law Institute.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE