

Regular Session, 2014

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 173

BY REPRESENTATIVE BARROW

MENTAL HEALTH: Requests the Department of Health and Hospitals and the division of administration to report to the House Committee on Health and Welfare concerning the discontinuation of the operation of the Earl K. Long Medical Center Mental Health Emergency Room Extension upon privatization of that hospital

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the Department of Health and Hospitals and the division of
3 administration to report to the House Committee on Health and Welfare concerning
4 reasons for the Mental Health Emergency Room Extension, previously in operation
5 from 2010 through 2013, at Earl K. Long Medical Center ceasing to operate upon
6 privatization of that hospital, and concerning how services formerly delivered there
7 will be resumed in the community of Baton Rouge.

8 WHEREAS, from January 2010 through April 2013, the publicly operated Earl K.
9 Long Medical Center, with assistance from the Capital Area Human Services District,
10 maintained a Mental Health Emergency Room Extension (MHERE); and

11 WHEREAS, the MHERE served as a ten to fifteen-bed crisis receiving center where
12 specialized staff provided a high level of screening and assessment to people in behavioral
13 health crises, in order to properly connect those patients to either acute or ongoing
14 community-based treatment to diminish the recurrent need for crisis services; and

15 WHEREAS, the MHERE served as a crisis continuum component that assisted law
16 enforcement, hospital emergency departments, and jails, as well as public and private sector
17 budgets, in dealing with the increasing rate of deinstitutionalization of persons needing
18 mental health treatment and the effects of the increasing rate of substance abuse in the
19 community, in addition to helping those returning to our communities from active military
20 duty; and

1 WHEREAS, within two years of operating ten to fifteen beds at a time at an annual
2 operational cost of one million six hundred thousand dollars, the MHERE served more than
3 three thousand four hundred patients and saved the state over twenty million six hundred
4 thousand dollars by avoiding hospitalizations for more than sixty-five percent of the patients
5 admitted to the MHERE; and

6 WHEREAS, in April 2013, concurrent with the privatization of the Earl K. Long
7 Medical Center, the MHERE closed and no longer operates in Baton Rouge; and

8 WHEREAS, other local hospital emergency rooms and parish prison facilities are
9 now seeing a significant increase in admittance of people in behavioral health and substance
10 abuse disorder crises; and

11 WHEREAS, the original cooperative endeavor agreement entered into by the state
12 of Louisiana, through the division of administration and the Department of Health and
13 Hospitals, on February 5, 2010, during the privatization of the Earl K. Long Medical Center,
14 provided that the state would work cooperatively with the Capital Area Human Services
15 District and the office of mental health of the Department of Health and Hospitals to address
16 the ongoing provision of mental health services in the service area.

17 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the
18 Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Department of Health and
19 Hospitals and the division of administration to report to the House Committee on Health and
20 Welfare concerning reasons for the Mental Health Emergency Room Extension, previously
21 in operation from 2010 through 2013, at Earl K. Long Medical Center ceasing to operate
22 upon privatization of that hospital, and concerning how services formerly delivered there
23 will be resumed in the community of Baton Rouge.

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
25 secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals and the commissioner of the division
26 of administration.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

Barrow

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