

2017 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 205

BY REPRESENTATIVE BROADWATER

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health and the Louisiana Workforce Commission to organize a committee to discuss and develop strategies for addressing the shortage of direct support professionals and submit a quarterly report to the House Committee on Health and Welfare and the House Committee on Labor and Industrial Relations.

WHEREAS, direct support professionals such as direct care workers, personal assistants, personal attendants, in-home support workers, and paraprofessionals are the backbone of publicly funded long-term support services for thousands of Louisiana residents; and

WHEREAS, direct support professionals provide a broad range of support including the preparation of meals, medication management, bathing, dressing, mobility assistance, transportation, as well as any other number of necessary daily affairs required by persons in need; and

WHEREAS, the direct care professional workforce shortage in Louisiana and around the nation has created a national and state public health crisis while the need for services grows ever greater; and

WHEREAS, with low pay, sporadic hours, and a high rate of injury, the direct support professionals industry has an unusually high turnover in employment which has a highly disruptive affect on those for whom the workers are caring, causing emotional concerns as well as a potential compromise of safety and health; and

WHEREAS, low Medicaid provider rates perpetuate the poverty level of direct support professionals, leaving many of the professionals eligible for need-based services themselves, regardless of the fact that they work and pay taxes; and

WHEREAS, providers, who are price-takers and not price-setters, struggle to compete against other employers who have the funds and security to attract and retain qualified staff; and

WHEREAS, in-home support provided by direct support staff is essential to the prevention of more costly healthcare interventions such as hospitalization or institutionalization.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby recognize the vital role of direct support professionals in enhancing the lives of individuals with disabilities and does hereby urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health and the Louisiana Workforce Commission to organize a committee, to be called the Direct Service Professional Workforce Committee, to discuss and develop strategies for addressing the shortage of direct support professionals and submit quarterly reports to the House Committee on Health and Welfare and the House Committee on Labor and Industrial Relations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee shall be chaired by the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health or his designee and composed as follows:

- (1) The secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health or his designee.
- (2) The executive director of the Louisiana Workforce Commission or his designee.
- (3) The executive director of the governor's office of women's policy or his designee.
- (4) The president of the Louisiana Community and Technical College System or his designee.
- (5) The president of the Community Provider Association or his designee.
- (6) The executive director of the Arc of Louisiana or his designee.
- (7) The coordinator of the Supported Living Network or his designee.
- (8) The executive director of the Developmental Disabilities Council or his designee.

- (9) The president of People First of Louisiana or his designee.
- (10) The president of the Support Coordination Alliance or his designee.
- (11) One family member of an individual with a disability appointed by People First of Louisiana.
- (12) One direct support professional appointed by People First of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the committee shall serve without compensation and the committee may utilize the services of the staff of the Louisiana Department of Health.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee shall concentrate on the following functions:

- (1) Reviewing strategies utilized by other states.
- (2) Outlining onboarding processes and costs.
- (3) Studying the best practices for recruitment and retention of employees.
- (4) Identifying policies, resources, and programs available for employers of direct support professionals.
- (5) Compiling an inventory of resources for the employers of direct support professionals.
- (6) Soliciting input and perspective on policies and practices, training requirements, onboarding requirements, medication administration requirements, and other policies impacting the direct support professional workforce.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the first meeting of the Direct Support Professional Workforce Committee shall be held no later than July 15, 2017, and shall meet at least monthly.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Direct Support Professional Workforce Committee shall submit a written report to the House Committee on Health and Welfare and the House Committee on Labor and Industrial Relations on a quarterly basis.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Direct Support Professional Workforce Committee shall complete its study no later than thirty days after the convening of the 2020 Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health and the executive director of the Louisiana Workforce Commission.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES