

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 41

BY SENATOR BROOME AND REPRESENTATIVES MICHAEL JACKSON,
RICHARD, SIMON AND WILLMOTT

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Department of Health and Hospitals to continue its reliance on the Medicaid Purchase Plan (MPP) Advisory Council for program outreach, education, review and guidance.

WHEREAS, the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 (P.L. 106-170) was intended to enhance work incentives for persons with disabilities by changing programs operated by the Social Security Administration, the Department of Labor, and the Department of Health and Human Services; and

WHEREAS, Section 201 of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 created two new optional categorically needy Medicaid eligibility groups to eliminate barriers to employment for individuals with disabilities by improving access to health care; and

WHEREAS, securing and maintaining competitive employment in an integrated setting remains a significant challenge for individuals with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, current statistics show that three out of every four individuals with significant disabilities are not working; and

WHEREAS, one of the major barriers for individuals with disabilities is the fear of losing comprehensive health coverage if they work; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana citizens with disabilities represent an untapped and often skilled labor pool; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana has implemented an effective Medicaid Buy-in program, Medicaid Purchase Plan, which allows enrollees with disabilities to pay a premium and obtain or retain health care benefits, and allows individuals with disabilities to contribute tax dollars by returning to the workforce; and

WHEREAS, while the MPP Advisory Council has contributed to significant improvements in Medicaid and other services to support people with disabilities in their competitive employment efforts, thousands of Louisiana citizens with disabilities who want to work and pay taxes still remain idle and dependent upon state and federal assistance.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Department of Health and Hospitals to continue to work with the Medicaid Purchase Plan Advisory Council, to provide it access to enrollment and utilization data, and to seek its guidance on health care policy that impacts workers with disabilities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the MPP Advisory Council be continued in the absence of funding provided through the state's Medicaid Infrastructure and Competitive Employment System Grants, with sustainability provided by its members with no direct funding provided by the state.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the MPP Advisory Council continue to consult with and assist the department by providing input and guidance, making recommendations, assisting with Medicaid Purchase Plan outreach and education efforts, and participating in program review and evaluation, as well as with other health care issues that impact workers with disabilities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the MPP Advisory Council continue to meet at regularly scheduled intervals.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the council be composed of twenty-six members, representing each of the following:

- (1) Medicaid, director or designee.
- (2) Office of Developmental Disabilities, director or designee.
- (3) Louisiana Workforce Commission, director or designee.
- (4) Louisiana Rehabilitation Services, director or designee.
- (5) Statewide Independent Living Council, director or designee.
- (6) Louisiana Commission for the Deaf, director or designee.
- (7) Office of Aging and Adult Services, director or designee.
- (8) Office of Behavioral Health, director or designee.
- (9) People First of Louisiana, director or designee.

- (10) Mental Health America of Louisiana, director or designee.
- (11) Families Helping Families, director or designee.
- (12) Advocacy Center, director or designee.
- (13) Louisiana Assistive Technology Access Network, director or designee.
- (14) Independence Regained, Inc., director or designee.
- (15) Work Incentives Planning and Assistance.
- (16) Office of Citizens with Developmental Disabilities, director or designee.
- (17) Louisiana Department of Economic Development.
- (18) Nine consumer advocates, representing people with one or more of the following;
 - a. Brain injury.
 - b. Spinal cord injury.
 - c. Behavioral health issues.
 - d. Visual impairment.
 - e. Hearing impairment.
 - f. Intellectual disability (such as autism, mental retardation and learning disability).
 - g. Chronic disease (such as cancer, diabetes, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy).
 - h. Orthopedic impairment.
 - i. Military service injury.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES