

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 79

BY SENATOR MURRAY AND REPRESENTATIVE LEGER

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request that the hospitals and behavioral health treatment facilities in the parishes of Orleans, Jefferson, Plaquemines, and St. Bernard report to the president of the Louisiana Senate, the speaker of the Louisiana House of Representatives, the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare, the House of Representatives Committee on Health and Welfare, and the Senate Select Committee on Women and Children certain information regarding the quantity of behavioral health treatment, including both mental illness and substance abuse, sought in the four parishes during specific time frames.

WHEREAS, the citizens of Louisiana in the parishes of Orleans, Jefferson, Plaquemines, and St. Bernard who require inpatient care for behavioral health issues, including mental illness and substance abuse, particularly when experiencing an initial acute crisis and during any follow-up inpatient treatment are facing substantial reductions in the access to inpatient beds available as a result of reductions in funding to various agencies of the state, particularly the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center and its affiliated hospitals and clinics in the four-parish area; and

WHEREAS, it is expected that the funding reductions proposed in the 2012-2013 Fiscal Year budget will cause the elimination of available mental health and substance abuse inpatient beds and related behavioral health treatment services which will adversely affect the citizens in the parishes of Orleans, Jefferson, Plaquemines, and St. Bernard; and

WHEREAS, these reductions in patient care dollars from the state will impose hardships on municipalities and parish governments in dealing with citizens with mental health and substance abuse issues on the streets rather than in appropriate inpatient facilities; and

WHEREAS, the reduction in funding for treating those with behavioral health issues

will further stress limited local response mechanisms, services, and supports, including local emergency services which have been unduly burdened since 2005 in the aftermath of hurricanes Katrina and Rita; and

WHEREAS, it is feared that the safety of the general population will be placed at greater risk as a result of the scarcity of treatment options for those with mental health and substance abuse issues.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby request that each licensed hospital and behavioral health treatment facility in the parishes of Orleans, Jefferson, Plaquemines, and St. Bernard monitor the inflow and outflow of patients seeking behavioral health treatment, both mental health and substance abuse, in emergency rooms.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each licensed hospital and behavioral health treatment facility in the parishes of Orleans, Jefferson, Plaquemines, and St. Bernard monitor the number of hours, to the nearest quarter hour, the duration of inpatient treatment for patients in need of inpatient or residential care for behavioral health, both mental health or substance abuse, treatment in acute psychiatric units and licensed substance abuse treatment facilities for those in need of inpatient or residential care.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each licensed hospital and behavioral health treatment facility in the parishes of Orleans, Jefferson, Plaquemines, and St. Bernard monitor the average length of stay in these facilities for those seeking treatment in acute psychiatric units and licensed substance abuse facilities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each licensed hospital and behavioral health treatment facility in the parishes of Orleans, Jefferson, Plaquemines, and St. Bernard monitor the number of citizens who seek treatment for mental health or substance abuse issues outside the city of New Orleans and the distance traveled from home by each patient seeking such services.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each licensed hospital and behavioral health treatment facility in the parishes of Orleans, Jefferson, Plaquemines, and St. Bernard monitor their hospitalization and substance abuse facility rates per patient per day and prepare a monthly compilation of those costs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each licensed hospital and behavioral health treatment facility in the parishes of Orleans, Jefferson, Plaquemines, and St. Bernard report all these findings monthly in an easy-to-follow report to be issued by way of both electronic mail and United States mail to the following:

(1) The president of the Louisiana Senate and the speaker of the Louisiana House of Representatives.

(2) The respective chairmen of the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare and the House Committee on Health and Welfare to be distributed to all committee members.

(3) The chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Women and Children.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a comprehensive report, reporting on the period from the time of the adoption of this Resolution through December 31, 2012, be delivered to all the above no later than March 1, 2013.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that such reporting shall continue throughout the 2012-2013 Fiscal Year and be compiled in a comprehensive report of the numbers from both 2012 and 2013 and presented to the above by February 1, 2014.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Department of Health and Hospitals to notify all licensed hospitals and behavioral health treatment facilities, including those for both mental illness and substance abuse treatment in the parishes of Orleans, Jefferson, Plaquemines, and St. Bernard; to the president of the Louisiana Senate, the speaker of the Louisiana House of Representatives; the chairmen of the Senate and House committees on health and welfare; and the chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Women and Children.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES