

Regular Session, 2014

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 162

BY SENATOR BROOME

MENTAL HEALTH. Requests the Department of Health and Hospitals and the division of administration to report to the Senate and House committees on health and welfare why the operation of the Earl K. Long Medical Center Mental Health Emergency Room Extension was not continued upon privatization of that hospital, and how such services will be resumed in Baton Rouge.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals and the division of  
3 administration to report to the Senate and House committees on health and welfare  
4 why the operation of the Mental Health Emergency Room Extension (MHERE)  
5 previously in operation from 2010 through 2013 at the Earl K. Long Medical Center  
6 was not continued upon privatization of that hospital, and how such services will be  
7 resumed in the community of Baton Rouge.

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

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

16 WHEREAS, this MHERE served as a crisis continuum component that assisted law  
17 enforcement, hospital emergency departments, and jails, as well as public and private sector  
18 budgets, in dealing with increasing deinstitutionalization; the effects of increasing substance

1 abuse; and helping those returning to our communities from active combat; and

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

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

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

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

17 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana  
18 does hereby urge and request the Department of Health and Hospitals and the division of  
19 administration to investigate and, on or before September 1, 2014, report to the Senate and  
20 House committees on health and welfare why the Mental Health Emergency Room  
21 Extension or a comparable facility was not continued in the privatization of the Earl K. Long  
22 Medical Center, and how the department and the division plan to ensure that those services  
23 are 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.

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The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Julie J. Baxter.

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DIGEST

Broome

SR No. 162

Requests the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals and the division of administration to report to the Senate and House committees on health and welfare why the operation of the Mental Health Emergency Room Extension (MHERE) previously in operation from 2010 through 2013 at the Earl K. Long Medical Center was not continued upon privatization of that hospital, and how such services will be resumed in the community of Baton Rouge.