

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 178

BY SENATORS ALLAIN, CORTEZ, GUILLORY, LAFLEUR, MILLS AND PERRY

A RESOLUTION

To create and provide for the Task Force on Funding the Acadiana Criminalistics Laboratory.

WHEREAS, the Acadiana Criminalistics Laboratory District, a political subdivision coterminous with the boundaries of the parishes of Acadia, Evangeline, Iberia, Lafayette, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, and Vermilion, is established for the operation of the Acadiana Criminalistics Laboratory; and

WHEREAS, the district is governed by the Acadiana Criminalistics Laboratory Commission which is to maintain and operate the laboratory for the purpose of crime detection, prevention, investigation, and other related activities in connection with criminal investigations; and

WHEREAS, the commission and laboratory serve the southwest Louisiana parishes of Acadia, Evangeline, Iberia, Lafayette, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, and Vermilion, comprising the Evangeline Law Enforcement Planning District; and

WHEREAS, the operations of the commission are financed primarily through court costs authorized by state law by the defendant unless he is acquitted or the prosecution or proceeding is dismissed; and

WHEREAS, state law permits contributions by each parish governing authority, district attorney, and sheriff to assist in alleviating any deficit that may be existing in the operating funds of a laboratory commission; and

WHEREAS, the commission is authorized to levy ad valorem, sales, and other taxes authorized by the constitution for political subdivisions, as approved by a majority of the qualified voters of the district voting in an election held for that purpose and to expend funds produced therefrom for capital expenditures and for the operation of the laboratory; and

WHEREAS, the commission is also authorized to borrow monies for the

maintenance and operation of the laboratory; and

WHEREAS, the membership of the Acadiana Criminalistics Laboratory Commission includes the sheriff of each parish within the Evangeline Law Enforcement Planning District or his designee, the district attorney of each judicial district within the Evangeline Law Enforcement Planning District or his designee, the president of the Iberia Parish Council or his designee, and one member of the governing authority of each other parish within the Evangeline Law Enforcement Planning District appointed by the respective governing authorities; and

WHEREAS, there is an ongoing concern over the sufficiency of revenues for the maintenance and operation of the laboratory; and

WHEREAS, there is a need to perform a comprehensive review of current funding and study other possible funding sources for the laboratory.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Task Force on Funding the Acadiana Criminalistics Laboratory is hereby established to review existing funding sources and to propose, as necessary, additional funding sources for the maintenance and operation of the laboratory.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the membership of the task force shall consist of the following:

(1) The sheriff of each parish within the Evangeline Law Enforcement Planning District, or the sheriff's chief deputy or chief administrative assistant as designated by the sheriff.

(2) The district attorney of each parish within the Evangeline Law Enforcement Planning District or the district attorney's first assistant or an assistant district attorney, as designated by the district attorney.

(3) The president of the governing authority of each parish within the Evangeline Law Enforcement District, or the president's administrative assistant or any other person, designated by the president.

(4) The chief judge of each judicial district with jurisdiction in at least one parish included in the Acadiana Criminalistics Laboratory District, or a district judge designated by the chief judge.

(5) The judge of the city court of each city court within the Acadiana Criminalistics Laboratory District.

(6) The state superintendent of the Louisiana State Police, or his designee.

(7) The director of the Acadiana Criminalistics Laboratory Commission who shall serve as a non-voting member and secretary of the task force.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the names of appointments to the task force or designees of task force members shall be submitted to the task force secretary on or before August 1, 2014, and that the secretary shall call the first meeting of the task force on or before September 1, 2014.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that at the first meeting of the task force, the members shall elect a chairman and other officers deemed necessary, other than secretary, from the task force membership.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the task force shall serve without pay or per diem.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall submit a written report of its findings, including any recommendations for legislation, to the Senate on or before February 1, 2015, at which time the task force shall terminate.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the sheriff and president of the parish governing authority of each of the following parishes - Acadia, Evangeline, Iberia, Lafayette, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, and Vermilion, the district attorney and chief judge of each of the following judicial districts - Thirteenth, Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and Twenty-Seventh, the judge of each of the following city courts - Abbeville, Breaux Bridge, Crowley, Eunice, Franklin, Jeanerette, Kaplan, Lafayette, Morgan City, New Iberia, Opelousas, Rayne, and Ville Platte, the Acadiana Criminalistics Laboratory Commission, and the superintendent of the Louisiana State Police.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE