

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 7

BY SENATOR MILLS

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health and the Louisiana Department of Education to coordinate an awareness effort to have children screened for scoliosis.

WHEREAS, scoliosis is a condition in which the spine develops in a curved, side to side "S" shaped pattern for no known cause or reason; and

WHEREAS, scoliosis begins developing in childhood and because its progression can be gradual and painless, it is most commonly undiagnosed in children until the ages of ten to fourteen; and

WHEREAS, roughly three million new cases of scoliosis are diagnosed in the United States each year; and

WHEREAS, screening for scoliosis is part of the routine evaluation conducted by a pediatrician during an annual well child visit; and

WHEREAS, in Louisiana nearly every single child is covered by commercial insurance or Medicaid, and as part of that health coverage, is eligible and should be participating in an annual well child visit with their pediatrician; and

WHEREAS, communication with the pediatrician is key in the early diagnosis of scoliosis at the well child visit and throughout the year if signs of scoliosis are suspected in the child; and

WHEREAS, parents and teachers have the greatest opportunity to detect early signs of scoliosis in a child, such as noticing that one shoulder blade is higher than the other, that pants and hems hang unevenly, or that there is an obvious curve in the spine; and

WHEREAS, when a parent or teacher has any suspicion that a child may have scoliosis, communication is key to ensuring that the parent relays these concerns to the child's pediatrician during the well child visit or as needed throughout the year; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics supports and endorses a joint position statement on screening for the early detection of scoliosis in adolescents issued by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Scoliosis Research Society, the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, and the Pediatric Orthopaedic Society of North America which provides for a routine screening for spine deformity by the child's medical home physician as part of a preventive services visit; and

WHEREAS, parental awareness of the signs of scoliosis and more robust communication between the parents, teachers, and the child's pediatrician can lead to a more efficient screening process, potential early diagnosis, and opportunity for less invasive treatments.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby request the Louisiana Department of Health and the Louisiana Department of Education to coordinate an awareness effort to have children screened for scoliosis.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health, the superintendent of the Louisiana Department of Education, and the executive director of the Louisiana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE