

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 42

BY SENATOR MIZELL

A RESOLUTION

To authorize and direct the re-creation of the Louisiana Women's Incarceration Task Force under the jurisdiction of the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus and the Department of Public Safety & Corrections as originally created by HCR 27 of the 2018 Regular Session and continued by HCR 37 of the 2019 Regular Session and grant them new authority to study, evaluate, analyze, and undertake a comprehensive review of the state's and local municipal criminal justice systems as it relates to prenatal and postpartum care of incarcerated pregnant women and the need for babies to bond with their mothers and to report its findings and policy recommendations by February 1, 2021.

WHEREAS, over the last several years, Louisiana has built upon the success of the justice reinvestment task force while recognizing that incarcerated women face unique challenges and therefore may or may not benefit from reform efforts; and

WHEREAS, according to United States Bureau of Justice Statistics in 2017, Louisiana had the seventh highest women's incarceration rate in the United States and incarcerated more than two thousand women at a cost of over \$50 million; and

WHEREAS, the most effective changes will be made when all those impacted or involved in the criminal justice system have representation in developing policies and processes related to women's incarceration, and input from all criminal justice stakeholders is essential in the development and implementation of these changes; and

WHEREAS, it is beneficial to the entire population of the state of Louisiana to develop a broadly diverse and cross-disciplinary task force to study correction systems for women with the goal of producing a body of research resulting in making specific policy recommendations to implement placement and behavioral practices which address prenatal and postpartum care of incarcerated pregnant women and the need for babies to bond with their mothers.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby authorize and direct the re-creation of the Louisiana Women's Incarceration Task Force.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force is hereby authorized and directed to study, evaluate, analyze, and undertake a comprehensive review of the state's and local municipal criminal justice systems as it relates to prenatal and postpartum care of pregnant incarcerated women and the need for babies to bond with their mothers. The information gathered shall be used to develop policy recommendations for the Senate to:

(1) Develop practices and processes that avoid placing additional trauma or harm upon pregnant women as they navigate the criminal justice system.

(2) Address the holistic health of women to include access to hormone therapy, prenatal care, reproductive health, access to other medicine to maintain health, consistent health screenings, mental health access, and access to substance use and recovery resources.

(3) Increase and evaluate programming available to pregnant women during and after incarceration with the intention of self-determined development.

(4) Ensure the availability of gender responsive resources to support the dignity and quality of life of all women.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall be bipartisan and shall be composed of the following members:

(1) Three representatives of criminal justice agencies designated by the governor.

(2) The secretary of the Department of Public Safety & Corrections, or his designee.

(3) The president of the Louisiana Senate, or his designee who shall be a senator.

(4) Chair of the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus.

(5) A physician specializing in OB/GYN designated by Our Lady of the Lake Hospital.

(6) A nurse specializing in obstetrics designated by Woman's Hospital.

(7) A representative of the GRACE Program at Woman's Hospital.

(8) The president of the Louisiana Sheriffs' Association, or his designee.

(9) The president of the Louisiana District Attorneys' Association, or his designee.

The chair of the task force shall be the secretary of the Department of Public Safety

& Corrections, or his designee. All other officers, if any, shall be elected by and from the membership of the task force.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a majority of the membership of the task force shall constitute a quorum and shall meet at predetermined and agreed upon dates by the task force, enforced by the chairman, or upon an affirmative vote of a majority of the task force members. All members must be notified in writing of all meetings at least two weeks before the date on which a meeting of the task force is scheduled.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus and the Department of Public Safety & Corrections shall provide the administrative assistance and staffing as may be necessary in order to enable the task force to accomplish its goals.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force may request the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus, the Department of Public Safety & Corrections, and the office of the judicial administrator of the Louisiana Supreme Court to provide relevant data and staff expertise upon request.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall meet no less than two times prior to the start of the 2021 Regular Legislative Session. The initial meeting of the task force shall be called by the president of the Louisiana Senate. The first meeting shall take place no later than November 15, 2020.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall prepare and submit a final report that contains a detailed statement of the findings and policy recommendations of the task force to the governor, president of the Louisiana Senate, and the chief justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court by February 15, 2021. The report shall be made available to the public.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the governor, the secretary of the Department of Public Safety & Corrections, the chief medical officer of Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center, the chief of nursing at Woman's Hospital, the president of the Louisiana Sheriffs' Association, and the president of the District Attorneys' Association.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE