

2021 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 36

BY SENATOR JACKSON

LAW ENFORCEMENT. Creates a task force to study the implementation of a partnership between law enforcement agencies and safety net hospitals.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To create a task force to study the implementation of a partnership between law enforcement  
3 agencies and safety net hospitals to reduce or eliminate incidents of law enforcement  
4 officers going to nonviolent calls or behavioral or social crises in which no crime has  
5 taken place.

6 WHEREAS, today, law enforcement officers spend a considerable amount of their  
7 time responding to low-priority 911 calls related to quality-of-life issues or social service  
8 needs; and

9 WHEREAS, many of these calls for service could be safely resolved by trained  
10 civilians experienced in finding long-term solutions to the root causes of community  
11 concerns; and

12 WHEREAS, law enforcement officers who respond to mental health crises may not  
13 be trained to try and communicate with the person in crisis or nearby community and family  
14 members; and

15 WHEREAS, the Center for American Progress (CAP) and the Law Enforcement  
16 Action Partnership (LEAP) propose that cities establish a new branch of civilian first  
17 responders known as "community responders" who would be dispatched in response to calls  
18 for service that often do not need a police response; and

1           WHEREAS, dispatching civilians in lieu of law enforcement officers can reduce  
2 unnecessary police responses and help prevent unjust arrests and uses of force, which  
3 disproportionately affect people with behavioral health disorders and disabilities; and

4           WHEREAS, it would also free up law enforcement resources, allowing officers to  
5 spend more time on key tasks such as addressing serious crime and building proactive  
6 relationships with communities; and

7           WHEREAS, in an analysis of 911 data from five American cities, CAP and LEAP  
8 found that 23 percent to 45 percent of calls for service were for less urgent or noncriminal  
9 issues such as noise complaints, disorderly conduct, wellness checks, or behavioral health  
10 concerns; and

11           WHEREAS, according to a recent CAP and LEAP report, across eight American  
12 cities, community responders could have responded to between 21 percent and 38 percent  
13 of 911 calls, and an additional 13 percent to 33 percent of calls could be resolved  
14 administratively without dispatching an officer; and

15           WHEREAS, a number of cities have already implemented civilian first response  
16 programs that incorporate elements of the community responder model; and

17           WHEREAS, community responders would be dispatched in response to two specific  
18 categories of calls:

19           (1) Behavioral health and social service calls. Community responders trained as  
20 paramedics, clinicians, or crisis intervention specialists could respond to lower-risk 911 calls  
21 related to mental health, addiction, and homelessness; and also include peer navigators  
22 whose personal experiences with behavioral health and social service needs can help build  
23 bridges with individuals involved in these 911 calls.

24           (2) Quality of life and conflict calls. Community responders could be dispatched to  
25 911 calls for nuisance complaints and nonviolent conflicts, which may include reports of  
26 suspicious people, youth behavioral issues, trespassing, and even simple assaults that do not  
27 involve weapons. Community responders who respond to these calls should be professionals  
28 with deep connections to the community and extensive training in conflict mediation; and

29           WHEREAS, the purpose of this partnership is to reduce incidents of injuries related  
30 to mental health emergencies while reducing the incarceration of the mentally ill; and

1           WHEREAS, it is appropriate to study the feasibility and implementation of this  
2 partnership in Louisiana.

3           THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana  
4 hereby creates a task force to study the implementation of a partnership between law  
5 enforcement agencies and safety net hospitals to reduce or eliminate incidents of law  
6 enforcement officers going to nonviolent calls or behavioral or social crises in which no  
7 crime is reported.

8           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a task force shall be composed of the following  
9 members:

10           (1) A representative of the Louisiana Department of Health, Office of Behavioral  
11 Health, designated by the secretary of the department.

12           (2) A representative of the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs, as designated by  
13 the governor.

14           (3) A representative of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) - Louisiana  
15 Chapter and a patient advocate for mental health, designated by the president of the chapter.

16           (4) A representative of the Louisiana Psychological Association, as designated by the  
17 president of the association.

18           (5) A representative of the Capital Area Human Services and a patient advocate for  
19 mental health, designated by the chair of the board of directors.

20           (6) A representative of the Louisiana Chiefs of Police Association, designated by the  
21 president of the association.

22           (7) A representative of the Louisiana Sheriffs' Association, designated by the  
23 president of the association.

24           (8) A representative of Louisiana State University Shreveport, designated by the  
25 chancellor of the university.

26           (9) A representative of Ochsner LSU Health Shreveport - Monroe Medical Center,  
27 designated by the chief executive officer of the medical center.

28           (10) A representative of Ochsner Medical Center - New Orleans, designated by the  
29 chief executive officer of the medical center.

30           (11) A representative of Louisiana's Mental Health Advocacy Service and a patient

1 advocate for mental health, designated by the chief of the board of trustees of the agency.

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall submit a written report of  
3 findings and recommendations to the Senate no later than February 15, 2022.

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the  
5 secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health, the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs,  
6 the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) - Louisiana Chapter, Louisiana  
7 Psychological Association, the Capital Area Human Services District, the Louisiana Chiefs  
8 of Police Association, the Louisiana Sheriffs' Association, the chancellor of Louisiana State  
9 University Shreveport, the chief executive officer of Ochsner LSU Health Shreveport -  
10 Monroe Medical Center, the chief executive officer of Ochsner Medical Center - New  
11 Orleans, and chair of the board of trustees of Louisiana's Mental Health Advocacy Service.

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The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part  
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Lebra R. Bias.

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DIGEST

SR 36 Original

2021 Regular Session

Jackson

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Provides that the task force be composed of the following:

- (1) A representative of the La. Department of Health, Office of Behavioral Health, designated by the secretary of the department.
- (2) A representative of the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs, as designated by the governor.
- (3) A representative of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) - Louisiana Chapter and a patient advocate for mental health, designated the president of the chapter.
- (4) A representative of the La. Psychological Association, as designated by the president of the association.
- (5) A representative of the Capital Area Human Services District and a patient advocate for mental health, designated by the dean of the board of directors.
- (6) A representative of the La. Chiefs of Police Association, designated by the president of the association.
- (7) A representative of the La. Sheriffs' Association, designated by the president of the association.
- (8) A representative of LSU Shreveport, designated by the chancellor of the university.

- (9) A representative of Ochsner LSU Health Shreveport - Monroe Medical Center, designated by the chief executive officer of the medical center.
- (10) A representative of Ochsner Medical Center - New Orleans, designated by the chief executive officer of the medical center.
- (11) A representative of Louisiana's Mental Health Advocacy Service and a patient advocate for mental health, designated by the chief of the board of trustees of the agency.

Requires that the task force submit a written report to the Senate no later than February 15, 2022.