

2021 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 105

BY REPRESENTATIVE DUPLESSIS

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To establish a task force dedicated to the education, treatment, and overall improvement of maternal mental healthcare within the state.

WHEREAS, women in their childbearing years account for the largest group of Americans with depression; and

WHEREAS, the mental health of women before, during, and after childbirth is an issue of great concern to those affected, their families, and their physicians; and

WHEREAS, the challenges associated with maternal mental health constitute a leading cause of maternal mortality; and

WHEREAS, according to the Louisiana Pregnancy-Associated Mortality Review 2017 Report that was released in September 2020, sixty-seven percent of all mental health conditions among women were pregnancy-associated; and

WHEREAS, the review committee deemed one hundred percent of the pregnancy-associated deaths it assessed to be preventable; and

WHEREAS, maternal depression and other mood disorders are serious and debilitating, but are treatable conditions; and

WHEREAS, children born to mothers with untreated depression are more likely to have developmental problems and higher utilization of medical and mental healthcare over their lifetimes; and

WHEREAS, it is critical that women who are suffering from depression or another maternal mental health disorder be diagnosed and treated; and

WHEREAS, addressing maternal mental health concerns has been identified as a critical need by the Louisiana Department of Health, the Louisiana Commission on Perinatal Care and the Prevention of Infant Mortality, the Louisiana Pregnancy-Associated Mortality Review, the Louisiana Pritzker Children's Initiative, and various other commissions, councils, and advisory boards in Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, the Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies Advisory Council, which was charged with assessing equity and community engagement in state initiatives addressing maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity, recommended that the state "ensure adequate access to high quality behavioral health services for pregnant and postpartum women, from early identification through screening and linkage to care and treatment for maternal mental health needs and substance abuse disorders"; and

WHEREAS, the March of Dimes' Prematurity Collaborative Birth Equity Consensus Statement for Mothers and Babies recognizes that the pursuit of explanations for the racial disparity in birth and maternal outcomes must employ social science disciplines and methods to best examine social and economic disadvantages as well as community and population assets for maternal mental and physical health; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of this state to establish a task force to identify and assess the functions and activities of existing state efforts and service systems focused on the mental health of women before, during, and after childbirth.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby establish the Louisiana Maternal Mental Health Task Force.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall have all of the following functions:

- (1) To study, review, and identify current individual, provider, and system barriers to screening, diagnosis, and treatment, with a particular focus on exploration of barriers for black and brown women and those who are privately insured or receive care through Medicaid.
- (2) To study, review, and facilitate current evidence-based research and emerging treatment options that are scalable in public and private health settings, particularly for black and brown women.
- (3) To identify provider population needs and patient needs in order to improve diagnosis and treatment.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Maternal Mental Health Task Force shall be composed of the following members:

- (1) A representative from the Louisiana Department of Health.
- (2) A representative from the office of behavioral health.

- (3) A representative from the office of public health.
- (4) A representative from the Department of Children and Family Services.
- (5) A representative from the Louisiana Mental Health Perinatal Partnership.
- (6) A representative from the National Birth Equity Collaborative.
- (7) A representative from the Louisiana Chapter of the March of Dimes.
- (8) A representative from the Human Services Interagency Council.
- (9) A representative from the Louisiana Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness.
- (10) A representative from Saul's Light.
- (11) A representative from the Birthmark Doulas.
- (12) A representative from the Louisiana Psychiatric Association.
- (13) A representative from the Covenant House New Orleans.
- (14) A representative from the GRACE Program at Woman's Hospital.
- (15) A representative from the Bridge Center for Hope.
- (16) A representative from District VII of the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.
- (17) A representative from the Louisiana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics.
- (18) A representative from the Louisiana Hospital Association.
- (19) A representative from the Institute of Women and Ethnic Studies.
- (20) A representative from the Louisiana State Nurses Association.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a chairperson, licensed in or affiliated with the medical profession, specifically maternal treatment, be elected at the first meeting.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Department of Health shall be responsible for facilitating the members of the Louisiana Maternal Mental Health Task Force.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Maternal Mental Health Task Force shall utilize the information gathered from the data that it collects and submit its findings in the form of a report to the Legislature of Louisiana no later than 30 days prior to the convening of the 2022 Regular Session.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the medical director of the Louisiana Maternal Mental Health Perinatal Partnership; to the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health; to the assistant secretary of the office of behavioral health; to the assistant secretary of the office of public health; to the secretary of the Department of Children and Family Services; to the founder and president of the National Birth Equity Collaborative; to the president of the Louisiana Chapter of the March of Dimes; to the coordinator of the Human Services Interagency Council; to the board president of the Louisiana Chapter of National Alliance on Mental Illness; to the executive director of Saul's Light; to the director of the Birthmark Doulas; to the president of the Louisiana Psychiatric Association; to the executive director of Covenant House New Orleans; to the director of the GRACE Program at Woman's Hospital; to the executive director of the Bridge Center for Hope; to the District VII director of the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists; to the president of the Louisiana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics; to the president of the Louisiana Hospital Association; to the president and chief executive officer of the Institute of Women and Ethnic Studies; and to the executive director of the Louisiana State Nurses Association.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE