2022 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 963

BY REPRESENTATIVE ORGERON AND SENATORS FIELDS, JACKSON, ROBERT MILLS, MIZELL, AND TALBOT

| 1 | AN ACT |
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| 2 | To enact R.S. 17:276.1 and 3996(B)(67), relative to required instruction in public schools; |
| 3 | to require instruction in water safety for public school students; to provide relative |
| 4 | to materials used for such instruction; to require public school governing authorities |
| 5 | to adopt policies to implement such instruction; and to provide for related matters. |
| 6 | Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana: |
| 7 | Section 1. This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Riley Bourgeois Act". |
| 8 | Section 2. The legislature finds and declares the following: |
| 9 | (1) Drowning is the number one cause of accidental death among children ages one |
| 10 | to four and the second leading cause of accidental death in children under the age of fourteen |
| 11 | in our nation. |
| 12 | (2) According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, drowning is the |
| 13 | third leading cause of death in children ages one to four in our state. |
| 14 | (3) For every child who dies from drowning, another eight children receive |
| 15 | emergency department care for non-fatal drowning. |
| 16 | (4) There were twenty-four infant and child drownings in our state in 2020. |
| 17 | Section 3. R.S. 17:276.1 and 3996(B)(67) are hereby enacted to read as follows: |
| 18 | §276.1. Water safety; required instruction |
| 19 | A.(1) Age- and grade-appropriate instruction on water safety shall be |
| 20 | provided to each public school student. Such instruction shall be incorporated into |
| 21 | an existing required course, such as health, physical education, or another course |
| 22 | deemed appropriate by the public school governing authority. |

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| 1 | (2) At a minimum, such instruction shall include instruction on the |
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| 2 | following: |
| 3 | (a) The proper use of flotation devices. |
| 4 | (b) Awareness of water conditions. |
| 5 | (c) The proper supervision of swim areas. |
| 6 | (d) Safe behaviors in and around the water. |
| 7 | (e) The importance of pool barriers and fencing. |
| 8 | (f) The importance of formal swim lessons. |
| 9 | (g) The importance of avoiding alcohol and substance use with water |
| 10 | recreation. |
| 1 | (h) The importance of cardiopulmonary resuscitation for drowning victims |
| 12 | and the importance of administering such aid. |
| 13 | B.(1) Each governing authority shall adopt policies necessary for the |
| 14 | implementation of this Section. |
| 15 | (2) Each governing authority may customize the instruction for its student |
| 16 | population based on geographic characteristics and any other special circumstances |
| 17 | applicable to the school or school district. |
| 18 | C.(1) The state Department of Education shall establish and maintain a |
| 19 | clearinghouse of instructional materials and information regarding model water |
| 20 | safety curricula and best practices for water safety instruction. |
| 21 | (2) The department shall review the materials and information at least once |
| 22 | biannually and revise them based on updated information, as needed. |
| 23 | * * * |
| 24 | §3996. Charter schools; exemptions; requirements |
| 25 | * * * |
| 26 | B. Notwithstanding any state law, rule, or regulation to the contrary and |
| 27 | except as may be otherwise specifically provided for in an approved charter, a |
| 28 | charter school established and operated in accordance with the provisions of this |
| 29 | Chapter and its approved charter and the school's officers and employees shall be |
| 30 | exempt from all statutory mandates or other statutory requirements that are |

| 1 | applicable to public schools and to public school officers and employees except for |
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| 2 | the following laws otherwise applicable to public schools with the same grades: |
| 3 | * * * |
| 4 | (67) Water safety instruction, R.S. 17:276.1. |
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| | SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES |
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| | PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE |
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| | GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA |
| | |

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APPROVED: