

2023 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 64

BY SENATOR FESI

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

CHILDREN. Creates Ezekiel's Law and provides relative to protecting children from abuse.
(8/1/23)

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AN ACT

To enact R.S. 46:2605(12), (22), (31), and (35) and 2607, relative to protecting children from abuse; to provide for membership on the Children's Cabinet Advisory Board; to provide for the Partners in Protecting Children Subcommittee; to provide for legislative findings; to provide for the membership, quorum, officers, and meetings of the subcommittee; to provide for recommendations by the subcommittee; to provide for designation of this Act as "Ezekiel's Law"; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. 46:2605(12), (22), (31), and (35) and 2607 are hereby enacted to read as follows:

§2605. Children's Cabinet Advisory Board

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B. The advisory board shall be composed of the following members:

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(12) The assistant secretary of family support of the Department of Children and Family Services.

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(22) The superintendent of the Louisiana State Police, or his designee.

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(31) The president of the Louisiana Association of Chiefs of Police, or his designee.

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(35) The executive director of the Louisiana Sheriffs' Association, or his designee.

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§2607. Partners in Protecting Children Subcommittee

A. The legislature hereby finds all of the following:

(1) Child abuse is a community problem. No single agency has the training, manpower, resources, or legal mandate to intervene effectively in all child abuse cases. No one agency has the sole responsibility for dealing with abused children.

(2) Effective community intervention involves the formation of a child protection partnership that includes professionals who understand and appreciate the different roles, responsibilities, strengths, and weaknesses of the other members but cooperate and coordinate their efforts.

(3) The most effective approach to cases involving child abuse is interagency coordination and planning. All partners in protecting children must work together with a common concern for the welfare of the child and with a common goal to communicate with mutual respect.

(4) Effective teamwork includes having a mechanism for the partner agencies to discuss and, if possible, resolve any issues that arise.

(5) An ongoing discussion of problems that the partners in protecting children encounter during investigations will help resolve them and will also clarify the roles and responsibilities of the partner agencies.

B. The Partners in Protecting Children Subcommittee is established

1 within the Children's Cabinet to provide a forum for public agencies whose
2 duties include responding to and investigating matters involving child abuse or
3 neglect. The subcommittee shall meet to consider policies and procedures for
4 responding to and investigating alleged child abuse with the goal of efficient
5 coordination of services and the chief objectives being to determine what
6 problems arise and how to meet the needs of the child.

7 C.(1) The subcommittee shall be composed of the following members:

8 (a) A representative of the Louisiana State Police, appointed by the
9 superintendent.

10 (b) A representative of the Louisiana Sheriffs' Association, appointed
11 by the executive director.

12 (c) A representative of the Louisiana Association of Chiefs of Police,
13 appointed by the president of the organization.

14 (d) A representative of the Louisiana District Attorneys Association,
15 appointed by the executive director.

16 (e) The secretary of the Department of Children and Family Services,
17 or his designee.

18 (2) The Children's Cabinet may appoint from time to time, to serve at
19 its pleasure, additional members to serve on matters about which the additional
20 members have expertise or experience.

21 (3) Members shall serve without compensation, except for per diem or
22 reimbursement of expenses to which they may be entitled as members of their
23 respective organizations.

24 D. A majority of the total membership shall constitute a quorum of the
25 subcommittee, and any official action taken by the subcommittee shall require
26 an affirmative vote of the majority of the quorum present and voting.

27 E. The subcommittee shall elect a chairman and any other officers
28 deemed necessary from among the membership.

29 F. The subcommittee shall meet at least once per quarter upon the call

1 **of the executive director of the Children's Cabinet.**
 2 **G. The subcommittee shall make recommendations to the Children's**
 3 **Cabinet, through the executive director, as determined necessary by the**
 4 **subcommittee. The subcommittee may include in its recommendations a request**
 5 **for legislation, as appropriate.**

6 Section 2. This Act shall be known and may be cited as "Ezekiel's Law".

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Brandi Cannon.

SB 64 Original	DIGEST 2023 Regular Session	Fesi
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Present law provides for the Children's Cabinet to coordinate and focus programs and funding for services to children and their families. Present law further provides for the Children's Cabinet Advisory Board to provide information and recommendations from the perspective of advocacy groups, service providers, and parents and provides for the membership of the board. Proposed law retains present law and adds as members the assistant secretary for family support and representatives of law enforcement.

Proposed law establishes the Partners in Protecting Children Subcommittee to provide a forum for public agencies whose duties include responding to and investigating matters involving child abuse or neglect. Proposed law provides that the subcommittee shall consider policies and procedures for responding to and investigating alleged child abuse with the goal of efficient coordination of services. Proposed law further provides for the membership, quorum, officers, and meetings of the subcommittee

Proposed law provides for the subcommittee to make recommendations to the Children's Cabinet, through the executive director, as determined necessary by the subcommittee, and which may include a request for legislation, as appropriate.

Proposed law shall be known and may be cited as "Ezekiel's Law".

Effective August 1, 2023.

(Adds R.S. 46:2605(12), (22), (31), and (35) and 2607)