

SENATE BILL NO. 64

BY SENATORS FESI, ALLAIN, BERNARD, BOUIE, CARTER, CLOUD, CONNICK, DUPLESSIS, FOIL, HENRY, HEWITT, JACKSON, KLEINPETER, MCMATH, MILLIGAN, FRED MILLS, ROBERT MILLS, MIZELL, MORRIS, POPE, PRICE, REESE, SMITH, WHITE AND WOMACK AND REPRESENTATIVES COX, CREWS, TRAVIS JOHNSON, LARVADAIN, MOORE AND SELDERS

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

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AN ACT

To enact R.S. 46:2605(B)(12) and (22) 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. R.S. 46:2605(B)(12) and (22) 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 the office on women's health and community health, or his designee.

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(22) The chairman of the Partners in Protecting Children Subcommittee, 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

1 training, manpower, resources, or legal mandate to intervene effectively in all
2 child abuse cases. No one agency has the sole responsibility for dealing with
3 abused children.

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

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

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

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

17 B. The Partners in Protecting Children Subcommittee is established
18 within the Children's Cabinet Advisory Board to provide a forum for public
19 agencies whose duties include responding to and investigating matters involving
20 child abuse or neglect. The subcommittee shall meet to consider policies and
21 procedures for responding to and investigating alleged child abuse with the goal
22 of efficient coordination of services and the chief objectives being to determine
23 what problems arise and how to meet the needs of the child.

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

25 (a) A representative of the Louisiana State Police, appointed by the
26 superintendent.

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

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

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

3 (e) A representative from the Louisiana Council of Juvenile and Family
4 Court Judges.

5 (f) The secretary of the Department of Children and Family Services, or
6 his designee.

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

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

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

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

18 F. The subcommittee shall meet at least once per quarter upon the call
19 of the executive director of the Children's Cabinet.

20 G. The subcommittee may include in its recommendations a request for
21 legislation, as appropriate.

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

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: _____