

1 WHEREAS, requiring LDH to promote the long-term sustainability and expansion
2 of school-based mental health services could be beneficial to students and parents alike; and

3 WHEREAS, additionally, there are several policy changes that LDH can employ to
4 drastically increase the amount of mental health services provided by schools; and

5 WHEREAS, by requiring LDH to use the administration fee that is already collected
6 to build an internal billing system like many other states already have, Louisiana school
7 districts would be able to receive an extra ten percent of their Medicaid expenses and fund
8 a position at DOE to support school-based Medicaid services; and

9 WHEREAS, in addition to funding a position at DOE, the administrative fee could
10 be utilized to increase school reimbursements and reduce school administrative burdens; and

11 WHEREAS, DOE currently has one position dedicated to supporting and providing
12 technical assistance, and it is currently being funded by the Elementary and Secondary
13 School Emergency Relief (ESSER) fund; and

14 WHEREAS, this position is providing most of the technical assistance and
15 professional development to schools on the school-based Medicaid program and is necessary
16 to continue after the ESSER funds are depleted; and

17 WHEREAS, in order to continue the ESSER funding, LDH should use a portion of
18 the existing administrative fee to fund this position at DOE permanently; and

19 WHEREAS, other states have similar positions in their education agencies that are
20 funded using the administrative fee that the Medicaid agency collects and require the
21 administrative fee generated by the Medicaid agency to cover program expenses only; and

22 WHEREAS, the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act provides support for mental
23 health service programs throughout the country, particularly in schools; and

24 WHEREAS, the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act instructs the Centers for
25 Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to update the regulations around the school-based
26 Medicaid program in order to reduce the administrative burden on schools and, while they
27 have not been announced yet, these guidelines are expected in the summer of 2023; and

28 WHEREAS, administrative burdens on schools could be reduced by requiring LDH
29 to make changes to the school-based Medicaid program as allowed by the recently-released
30 CMS guidelines; and

1 WHEREAS, in order to meet this requirement of making changes to the school-based
2 Medicaid program, LDH will need to submit a Medicaid state plan amendment (SPA) to take
3 advantage of the new guidelines established by CMS; and

4 WHEREAS, LDH would have to submit a SPA no later than October 2023, which
5 includes updates allowed by the newly released guidance; and

6 WHEREAS, this legislature should also consider providing additional funding to
7 build a pipeline of school-based mental health professionals by increasing scholarships, debt
8 forgiveness, or other methods; and

9 WHEREAS, these program changes, if implemented, are expected to significantly
10 reduce, or eliminate, the need for schools to bill for Medicaid services.

11 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
12 urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health and the state Department of Education
13 to create a task force to study the need to expand the number of seats serving adolescents in
14 long-term psychiatric residential treatment facilities across southeast Louisiana.

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the following individuals shall serve as members
16 of the task force:

17 (1) The secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health or his designee.

18 (2) The assistant secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health office of behavioral
19 health or his designee.

20 (3) The president of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education or his
21 designee.

22 (4) The assistant superintendent of the state Department of Education or his designee.

23 (5) The president of the Louisiana Psychological Association or his designee.

24 (6) The president of the Louisiana Psychiatric Medical Association or his designee.

25 (7) The president of the Louisiana Hospital Association or his designee.

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Department of Health and the state
27 Department of Education may choose to include nonprofit and private providers of long-term
28 psychiatric residential treatment facilities to serve on the task force.

29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the task force shall appoint a
30 chairman at the convening of its first meeting.

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that LDH and DOE shall provide staff support to the
2 task force.

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force, once determined, shall address
4 the following questions:

5 (1) What is the landscape of long-term PRTFs available to adolescents in southeast
6 Louisiana compared to the need?

7 (2) What does a fully financed adolescent behavioral health PRTF consist of?

8 (3) What, if any, are the funding sources?

9 (4) What does a fully leveraged Medicaid system do to fund the expansion of the
10 number of seats serving adolescents in PRTFs across southeast Louisiana?

11 (5) What partners or entities, if any, exist that may expand or open a child and
12 adolescent PRTF within the next two years?

13 (6) What barriers exist to developing and retaining both medical and front-line staff
14 of PRTFs in the region?

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Department of Health and the state
16 Department of Education shall take action on the Medicaid recommendations identified in
17 this Resolution no later than October 2023 and shall jointly present to the House Committee
18 on Health and Welfare the progress of these actions by the end of the 2023 calendar year and
19 thereafter on an annual basis.

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that on or before February 1, 2024, the task force
21 shall submit to the House Committee on Health and Welfare and the David R. Poynter
22 Legislative Research Library a written report of its findings and recommendations.

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
24 secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health, president of the State Board of Elementary
25 and Secondary Education, the superintendent of the state Department of Education, the
26 president of the Louisiana Psychological Association, the president of the Louisiana
27 Psychiatric Medical Association, and the president of the Louisiana Hospital Association.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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2023 Regular Session

Freeman

Requests the La. Dept. of Health and the La. Dept. of Education to create a task force to study expanding the seat availability for adolescents in psychiatric residential treatment facilities across southeast Louisiana.

Requests the task force to report its findings in the form of a written report by February 1, 2024.