

2023 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 270

BY REPRESENTATIVE KNOX

A RESOLUTION

To create the Task Force on Juvenile Offender Policies to develop recommendations for appropriate education, rehabilitation, and parole of juvenile offenders.

WHEREAS, the adverse effects associated with incarceration include diminished life outcomes, such as less success with educational attainment, personal and family relationships, and gainful employment; and

WHEREAS, inmates who participate in correctional education programs experience an approximately thirty-four percent lower chance of recidivism than those who do not; and

WHEREAS, employers consistently indicate the lack of soft skills among those candidates interviewed for possible hiring; and

WHEREAS, obtainment of employment following release from incarceration is thirteen percent greater for those inmates who participate in correctional education programs than those who do not; and

WHEREAS, improved behaviors are obtained within Louisiana's correctional institutions, particularly benefitting those individuals serving in prison oversight roles within the system, when inmates are presented with educational and training opportunities along with a potential for expediting their release; and

WHEREAS, the five-year recidivism rate for parole board releases, also known as discretionary parole, was less than twenty-eight percent as compared to more than forty-one percent for all releases as of June 30, 2022; and

WHEREAS, this decrease in recidivism indicates that individuals released via discretionary parole have a higher likelihood of successful reintegration into communities of Louisiana than those who leave via full-term or good time release; and

WHEREAS, juvenile offenders transferred to the adult prison system are those fifteen, sixteen, and seventeen-year olds convicted and sentenced as adults; and

WHEREAS, such convictions and sentences are increasingly prevalent in Louisiana's judicial system as a means for addressing criminal conduct by juveniles; and

WHEREAS, a comprehensive examination of studies, expert insights, and best practices implemented in other states could provide guidance for Louisiana's correctional system in reforming the education, rehabilitation, and parole of juvenile offenders to their benefit as well as that of the general public and its safety.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby establish and provide for the Task Force on Juvenile Offender Parole Policies to study juvenile incarcerations and applicable parole procedures for the purpose of developing recommendations on strategies that can deliver better outcomes for these individuals and their communities, as well as the Louisiana taxpayers who support the state's correctional system. Such recommendations may include specific proposals for legislation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the membership of the task force shall be as follows:

(1) The chairman of the House Committee on Administration of Criminal Justice, or his designee and two additional members of the committee to be appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives.

(2) The secretary of the Department of Public Safety and Corrections, or his designee.

(3) The director of the office of probation and parole, or his designee.

(4) The executive director of the Louisiana Board of Pardons and Committee on Parole, or his designee.

(5) The executive director of the Louisiana District Attorneys Association, or his designee.

(6) A district court judge, appointed by the Louisiana District Judges Association.

(7) A criminologist from the Louisiana State University, appointed by the dean of the school of Humanities and Social Sciences.

(8) A crime victims advocate appointed by the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement.

(9) The chief executive officer of the Pelican Institute for Public Policy, or his designee.

(10) The executive director of the Louisiana Parole Project, or his designee.

(11) The president and chief executive officer of the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry, or his designee.

(12) The executive director of Voice of the Experienced, or his designee.

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

(14) The state public defender, or his designee.

(15) The executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Louisiana, or his designee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each designating authority shall submit the name of his designee to the task force to the chairman of the House Committee on Administration of Criminal Justice.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the task force shall serve without compensation except for reimbursement of those expenses for which they may be individually entitled as members of the constituent organizations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall convene its first meeting at the call of the chairman of the House Committee on Administration of Criminal Justice, and at such first meeting the members shall elect a chairman and any other officers the task force should deem appropriate.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a majority of the task force shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business and all official actions of the task force shall require the affirmative vote of a majority of the members.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Public Safety and Corrections shall provide staff support as needed by the task force.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall submit a written report of its findings and recommendations to the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana not later than thirty days prior to the convening of the 2024 Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall terminate on the date of the submission of its report.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the task force members and appointing authorities provided for in this Resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force on Juvenile Offender Policies shall submit one print copy and one electronic copy of any report produced pursuant to this Resolution to the David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library as required by R.S. 24:772.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES