

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 206

BY SENATOR BARROW

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to provide precise details regarding the potential establishment of a forensic psychiatric hospital located in a densely populated community near a school.

WHEREAS, mental health is crucial due to its essential role in emotional, psychological, and social well-being, as well as its impact on cognitive and emotional processes, stress management, interpersonal connections, and decision-making abilities; and

WHEREAS, mental and physical health are intricately linked, with implications for the immune system, susceptibility to chronic conditions, sleep patterns, energy levels, overall well-being, physical fitness, and resilience; and

WHEREAS, by enhancing concentration, cognitive abilities, creativity, problem-solving skills, and decision-making capabilities, optimal mental and physical health has a positive impact on productivity and performance in academic, work, and personal pursuits; and

WHEREAS, forensic psychiatric facilities aim to enhance mental health and mitigate the risk of recidivism among individuals with serious mental illness who have faced criminal charges, as well as other patients with comparable complex needs; and

WHEREAS, forensic psychiatric care should be delivered in the least restrictive setting possible, with the goal of eventual community reintegration, while ensuring a secure treatment environment that addresses specific challenges, often requiring extended periods of treatment or rehabilitation; and

WHEREAS, careful selection of a site for a forensic psychiatric hospital is crucial to striking a delicate balance that prioritizes the well-being of patients and public safety while considering the potential impact on the community, educational staff, and students, which may evoke heightened anxiety, fear, or confusion, warranting a thorough assessment of potential implications; and

WHEREAS, extensive study and research is needed to assess the potential impacts of the forensic psychiatric hospital's presence on the psychological, social, and academic well-being of students, as well as the broader community, taking into account its effects on the educational environment, student well-being, overall community harmony, societal impact, economic productivity, public health, and the fulfillment of mental health needs, aiming to foster a healthier and more compassionate society.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby request the Louisiana Department of Health to furnish a report with details regarding a forensic psychiatric hospital potentially situated in a densely populated community and in close proximity to a school.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that upon receipt of an application for a forensic psychiatric hospital, the Louisiana Department of Health, the Louisiana Division of Administration, and the Office of State Procurement are requested to promptly notify the Louisiana state legislators representing the respective areas affected by the proposed facility.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report requested by this Resolution shall be submitted by September 30, 2023.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE