

2024 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 12

BY REPRESENTATIVE FREEMAN

CORRECTIONS: Continues the task force created by House Resolution No. 174 of the 2023 R.S. to study the educational programs in the prisons and jails of this state

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To continue the task force created in the 2023 Regular Session of the Legislature of
3 Louisiana pursuant to House Resolution No. 174 to study both the academic and
4 vocational educational programs within prisons and jails in Louisiana.

5 WHEREAS, on June 30, 2022, the Department of Public Safety and Corrections held
6 approximately twenty-five thousand six hundred seventy-seven individuals in its custody,
7 in addition to one thousand three hundred ninety-five women; and

8 WHEREAS, approximately fourteen thousand one hundred fifty-seven individuals
9 are housed in parish jails; and

10 WHEREAS, six percent of incarcerated individuals are in transitional work
11 programs; and

12 WHEREAS, in 2021, there were twelve thousand, one hundred ninety-one new
13 admissions to the Department of Public Safety and Corrections, of which thirteen percent
14 were under twenty-five years of age, twelve percent were over fifty years of age, ten percent
15 were women, and twenty-one percent were for violent crimes; and

16 WHEREAS, of these new admissions, sixty-five percent were parole eligible and
17 ninety-one percent were eligible for good time parole supervision; and

18 WHEREAS, in 2021, fifty-two parishes sentenced at least fifty individuals to prison,
19 thirty-three parishes sentenced at least one hundred individuals to prison, and sixteen
20 parishes sentenced at least two hundred individuals to prison; and

1 WHEREAS, in 2021, the nine leading parishes relative to sentencing are Caddo
2 Parish with one thousand one hundred six, Jefferson Parish with nine hundred thirty-six, St.
3 Tammany with six hundred sixty-nine, Calcasieu with sixty hundred twenty, East Baton
4 Rouge with five hundred ninety-nine, Bossier and Ouachita with five hundred twelve,
5 Livingston with four hundred eighty-six, and Orleans with four hundred sixty-one; and

6 WHEREAS, in 2021, there were twelve thousand five hundred seventy-two
7 individuals released from state custody; and

8 WHEREAS, the overwhelming majority of those individuals return to where they
9 consider to be home or where they have opportunity and support; and

10 WHEREAS, in 2021, forty-nine parishes received over fifty individuals from
11 custody, thirty-three parishes received at least one hundred individuals, sixteen parishes
12 received over two hundred individuals; and

13 WHEREAS, of those sixteen parishes, Orleans received nine hundred eighty-three
14 individuals, Caddo received nine hundred eighty-one individuals, Jefferson received nine
15 hundred forty-seven individuals, East Baton Rouge received seven hundred forty-nine
16 individuals, St. Tammany received six hundred sixty-six individuals, and Ouachita received
17 five hundred twelve individuals; and

18 WHEREAS, Louisiana recidivism rates, including revocations of supervision, vary
19 based on where an individual was released, with the highest rates of return to custody being
20 from parish jails at thirty-two percent, transitional work programs at twenty-eight percent,
21 and state prisons at twenty-five percent over three years; and

22 WHEREAS, this disparity in recidivism rates has remained consistent across years
23 of release, and the reduced rate for those who have obtained an education has reached
24 sixteen percent; and

25 WHEREAS, individuals listed under "education" by the department as having
26 attained a credential account for less than ten percent of those released between 2007 and
27 2020; and

28 WHEREAS, the recidivism rate of these individuals has steadily improved over time
29 between 2007 and 2012, averaging an eleven percent return to prison in the first year and a
30 reduction to five percent between the years of 2019 and 2020; and

1 WHEREAS, the MacKinac Center for Public Policy performed a comprehensive
2 analysis of correctional education between the years of 1980 and 2022 and documented the
3 impacts of various levels of education, including adult basic education reducing recidivism
4 by six point three percent over three years, and increasing employment by one point four
5 percent; and

6 WHEREAS, a completed secondary education, including a GED, reduces recidivism
7 by seven point one percent and increases employment by one point two percent over three
8 years; and

9 WHEREAS, vocational education reduces recidivism by nine point three percent and
10 increases employment by five point five percent over three years; and

11 WHEREAS, a college education reduces recidivism by twenty-seven point seven
12 percent and increases employment by ten point five percent over three years; and

13 WHEREAS, the RAND Corporation published a study in 2013 that showed every
14 one dollar spent on correctional education saved the public four to five dollars in police,
15 court, and correctional costs, in addition to saving the hardships inflicted through crime; and

16 WHEREAS, educated individuals in jails and prisons create a ripple effect of role
17 models and mentors, which reduces disciplinary infractions and provides a more capable
18 incarcerated workforce; and

19 WHEREAS, on average, half of incarcerated individuals have two school-aged
20 children, who have a higher risk of incarceration due to poverty, trauma, and family
21 disruption; and

22 WHEREAS, parents and children who have studied together, despite physical
23 distance, have reported feelings of mutual inspiration from one another; and

24 WHEREAS, the United States Department of Education has reinstated the Pell Grant
25 program for incarcerated students, increasing the viability of post-secondary education; and

26 WHEREAS, the Department of Public Safety and Corrections created an advisory
27 committee to implement a Pell Grant program; and

28 WHEREAS, incarcerated individuals participate in a wide range of programming that
29 varies between institutions, including support from outside volunteers, temporary
30 arrangements, and distance learning courses; and

1 WHEREAS, the 2022-2023 budget for the Department of Public Safety and
2 Corrections allocates one percent of the budget, five point eighty-six million dollars, for
3 rehabilitation, including forty-three staff education positions out of four thousand four
4 hundred eighty-seven employees, which is an average of five individuals per institution; and

5 WHEREAS, it is unclear how many educational staff exist across the many local jails
6 in Louisiana; and

7 WHEREAS, the Justice Reinvestment Initiative provided a reallocation of funds into
8 rehabilitative programming; and

9 WHEREAS, those funds have been reduced and been the subject of dispute; and

10 WHEREAS, five percent of the incarcerated population are women, who are spread
11 throughout multiple facilities in much less concentration than men with a different range of
12 programming opportunities; and

13 WHEREAS, good time credits are granted upon completion of certain educational
14 programming, so that prison time can be converted into parole time; and

15 WHEREAS, the Voice of the Experienced and Daughters Beyond Incarceration are
16 two organizations with deep connections with Louisiana's incarcerated individuals that are
17 committed to their rehabilitation and restoration of families; and

18 WHEREAS, Tulane University and Loyola University New Orleans both offer
19 bachelor degree programs in Louisiana prisons, and Northshore Technical College provides
20 associate degree programs in Louisiana prisons.

21 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the
22 Legislature of Louisiana does hereby continue the task force created in the 2023 Regular
23 Session of the Legislature of Louisiana pursuant to House Resolution No. 174 to study both
24 the academic and vocational educational programs within prisons and jails in Louisiana.

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the membership and duties of the task force
26 shall continue as provided in House Resolution No. 174 of the 2023 Regular Session of the
27 Legislature of Louisiana.

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Tulane University shall continue to provide staff
29 support to the task force.

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to each
2 of the task force members and the appointing entities provided in this Resolution.

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that one print copy and one electronic copy of any
4 report produced pursuant to this Resolution shall be submitted to the David R. Poynter
Legislative Research Library as required by R.S. 24:772 no later than March 1, 2025.

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)]

HR 12 Original

2024 Regular Session

Freeman

Continues the task force created in the 2023 Regular Session of the Legislature of La. pursuant to HR No. 174 to study both the academic and vocational educational programs within prisons and jails in La. Requires the task force to report its findings and recommendations to the legislature on or before March 1, 2025.