

2024 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 14

BY SENATOR JACKSON-ANDREWS

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH. Creates the Community Responder Task Force to study the implementation of a partnership between law enforcement agencies, behavioral health providers, and hospitals.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To create and provide for the Community Responder Task Force to study the
3 implementation of a partnership between law enforcement agencies, behavioral
4 health providers, and hospitals to reduce or eliminate incidents of law enforcement
5 officers responding to nonviolent calls or behavioral or social crises in which no
6 crime has taken place.

7 WHEREAS, law enforcement officers spend a considerable amount of their time
8 responding to low-priority 911 calls related to quality-of-life issues or social service needs;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, many of these calls for service could be safely resolved by trained
11 civilians experienced in finding long-term solutions to the root causes of community
12 concerns; and

13 WHEREAS, law enforcement officers who respond to mental health crises may not
14 be trained to communicate with the person in crisis or nearby community and family
15 members; and

16 WHEREAS, there are behavioral health specific responses and services designed in
17 association with a comprehensive crisis system of care that is modern, innovative, and
18 coordinated; and

1 WHEREAS, a statewide model for crisis response that maintains regional and
2 geographic relevance and builds upon the unique and varied strengths, resources, and needs
3 of Louisiana's individual communities will reduce and divert from both law enforcement
4 response and reliance on hospitals for crisis treatment as the default provider; and

5 WHEREAS, such a crisis response system encompasses a continuum of services that
6 include crisis prevention, acute intervention, and post-crisis recovery services and supports;
7 provides interventions to divert individuals from institutional levels of care including
8 inpatient placements, emergency department utilization, nursing facility placement, and
9 other out-of-home settings; and provides timely access to a range of acute crisis responses,
10 including locally available home- and community-based services and mobile crisis response,
11 resulting in a crisis continuum that includes and respects a bed-based crisis service but does
12 not rely on that level of service as the foundation of the crisis continuum; and

13 WHEREAS, nationally accepted best practices include Mobile Crisis Response
14 (MCR), a community-based response intended to provide relief, resolution, and intervention
15 to individuals where they are located through crisis supports and services during the first
16 phase of a crisis in the community and Community Brief Crisis Support (CBCS), an ongoing
17 crisis intervention response designed to provide relief, resolution, and intervention through
18 maintaining the member at home or in the community, de-escalating behavioral health needs,
19 referring for treatment needs, and coordinating with local providers; and

20 WHEREAS, the Center for American Progress (CAP) and the Law Enforcement
21 Action Partnership (LEAP) propose that cities establish a new branch of civilian first
22 responders known as "community responders", who would be dispatched in response to calls
23 for service that often do not need a police response; and

24 WHEREAS, dispatching civilians in lieu of law enforcement officers can reduce
25 unnecessary police responses and help prevent unjust arrests and uses of force, which
26 disproportionately affect people with behavioral health disorders and disabilities; and

27 WHEREAS, it would also allow law enforcement resources to be focused on
28 addressing serious crime and building proactive relationships with communities; and

29 WHEREAS, in an analysis of 911 data from five American cities, CAP and LEAP
30 found that twenty-three to forty-five percent of calls for service were for less urgent or

1 noncriminal issues such as noise complaints, disorderly conduct, wellness checks, or
2 behavioral health concerns; and

3 WHEREAS, according to a recent CAP and LEAP report, across eight American
4 cities, community responders could have responded to between twenty-one and thirty-eight
5 percent of 911 calls, and an additional thirteen to thirty-three percent of calls could be
6 resolved administratively without dispatching an officer; and

7 WHEREAS, a number of cities have already implemented civilian first response
8 programs that incorporate elements of the community responder model; and

9 WHEREAS, community responders would be dispatched in response to two specific
10 categories of calls:

11 (1) Behavioral health and social service calls. Community responders trained as
12 paramedics, clinicians, or crisis intervention specialists could respond to lower-risk 911 calls
13 related to mental health, addiction, and homelessness, and also include peer navigators
14 whose personal experiences with behavioral health and social service needs can help build
15 bridges with individuals involved in these 911 calls; and

16 (2) Quality of life and conflict calls. Community responders could be dispatched to
17 911 calls for nuisance complaints and nonviolent conflicts, which may include reports of
18 suspicious people, youth behavioral issues, trespassing, and even simple assaults that do not
19 involve weapons; community responders who respond to these calls should be professionals
20 with deep connections to the community and extensive training in conflict mediation; and

21 WHEREAS, the purpose of this partnership is to reduce incidents of injuries related
22 to mental health emergencies while reducing the incarceration of the mentally ill; and

23 WHEREAS, it is appropriate to study the feasibility and implementation of this
24 partnership in Louisiana; and

25 WHEREAS, the work of the task force originally began pursuant to Senate
26 Resolution Nos. 36 and 130 of the 2021 Regular Session and continued pursuant to Senate
27 Resolution No. 58 of the 2022 Regular Session.

28 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana
29 does hereby create and provide for the Community Responder Task Force within the
30 Louisiana Department of Health to study the implementation of a partnership between law

1 enforcement agencies, behavioral health providers, and hospitals to reduce or eliminate
2 incidents of law enforcement officers responding to nonviolent calls or behavioral or social
3 crises in which no crime is reported.

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall be composed of the
5 following members:

6 (1) The state senator for Senate District 34.

7 (2) A representative of the Louisiana Department of Health, office of behavioral
8 health, designated by the secretary of the department.

9 (3) A representative of the governor's office of disability affairs, designated by the
10 governor.

11 (4) A representative of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) - Louisiana
12 Chapter and a patient advocate for mental health, designated by the president of the chapter.

13 (5) A representative of the Louisiana Psychological Association, designated by the
14 president of the association.

15 (6) A representative of the Capital Area Human Services District and a patient
16 advocate for mental health, designated by the chair of the board of directors.

17 (7) A representative of the Louisiana Association of Chiefs of Police, designated by
18 the president of the association.

19 (8) A representative of the Louisiana Sheriffs' Association, designated by the
20 president of the association.

21 (9) A representative of Louisiana State University-Shreveport, designated by the
22 chancellor of the university.

23 (10) A representative of Ochsner LSU Health Shreveport - Monroe Medical Center,
24 designated by the chief executive officer of the medical center.

25 (11) A representative of Louisiana Children's Medical Center, designated by the chief
26 executive officer of the medical center.

27 (12) A representative of Louisiana's Mental Health Advocacy Service and a patient
28 advocate for mental health, designated by the chief of the board of trustees of the agency.

29 (13) A representative of the Tulane University School of Social Work, designated
30 by the dean of the school of social work.

1 (14) A representative of the Louisiana Fraternal Order of Police, designated by the
2 president of the organization.

3 (15) A representative of the Louisiana Ambulance Alliance, designated by the chief
4 executive officer of the organization.

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall be chaired by the state
6 senator for Senate District 34, and may elect a vice chair and other officers as considered
7 necessary.

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the names of the members chosen, designated,
9 or elected as provided herein shall be submitted to the Louisiana Department of Health,
10 office of behavioral health, by August 15, 2024.

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall hold its organizational
12 meeting not later than October 1, 2024, on the call of the chair, and at the organizational
13 meeting, the task force shall elect any other officers as considered necessary and shall adopt
14 rules for its own procedure.

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a majority of the total membership shall
16 constitute a quorum of the task force and any official action by the task force shall require
17 an affirmative vote of a majority of the quorum present and voting.

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Department of Health, office of
19 behavioral health, shall provide staff support to the task force.

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall submit a written report of
21 its findings and recommendations to the Senate no later than March 31, 2025.

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
23 secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health, the governor's office of disability affairs,
24 the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) - Louisiana Chapter, the Louisiana
25 Psychological Association, the Capital Area Human Services District, the Louisiana
26 Association of Chiefs of Police, the Louisiana Sheriffs' Association, the chancellor of
27 Louisiana State University Shreveport, the chief executive officer of Ochsner LSU Health
28 Shreveport - Monroe Medical Center, the chief executive officer of Louisiana Children's
29 Medical Center, the chair of the board of trustees of Louisiana's Mental Health Advocacy
30 Service, the dean of the Tulane University School of Social Work, the president of the

- 1 Louisiana Fraternal Order of Police, and the chief executive officer of the Louisiana
2 Ambulance Alliance.
-

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Amanda Trapp.

DIGEST

SR 14 Original

2024 Regular Session

Jackson-Andrews

Creates the Community Responders Task Force to study the implementation of a partnership between law enforcement agencies, behavioral health providers, and hospitals to reduce or eliminate incidents of law enforcement officers responding to nonviolent calls or behavioral or social crises in which no crime has taken place.