

2024 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 24

BY REPRESENTATIVE MARCELLE

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Department of Public Safety and Corrections to establish a policy not later than thirty days prior to the adjourning of the 2024 Regular Session of the Legislature to permit incarcerated parents at penal or correctional facilities under its jurisdiction to virtually attend the award ceremonies and graduation commencement exercises of their children.

WHEREAS, Louisiana has an estimated ninety-four thousand children with a parent who is incarcerated; and

WHEREAS, the parent-child bond is critical to a child's development; and

WHEREAS, the severance of the parent-child bond by the incarceration of a parent can have short-term and long-term social and emotional effects on the child; and

WHEREAS, these effects include poor education outcomes, juvenile justice involvement, physical and mental health issues, strained social and familial relationships, and criminal justice system involvement; and

WHEREAS, additionally, families with an incarcerated parent may experience financial instability, thereby increasing the risk that children of an incarcerated parent may live in poverty or be at risk of homelessness; and

WHEREAS, maintaining the parent-child relationship is beneficial to the child's development and provides incentive to the incarcerated parent to successfully reenter society; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Legislature has demonstrated its commitment to addressing the effects of mass incarceration, including the enactment of Act No. 284 of the 2020 Regular Session establishing the Council on the Children of Incarcerated Parents and Caregivers, within the office of the governor, hereinafter referred to in this Resolution as "The CIP Council"; and

WHEREAS, the CIP Council consists of stakeholders in the justice system, including the Department of Public Safety and Corrections, caregivers, children impacted by parental incarceration, and organizations such as Daughters Beyond Incarceration; and

WHEREAS, the CIP Council is charged with studying the effects of incarceration on children and recommending policy changes as a result of its findings; and

WHEREAS, the department authorizes penal and correctional facilities in its jurisdiction to establish policies to promote a continuous relationship between a child and the incarcerated parent; and

WHEREAS, despite the authority of the department to establish policies to promote the parent-child relationship, Daughters Beyond Incarceration and other stakeholders of the CIP Council have expressed the concern of children that their incarcerated parents are unable to attend the award ceremonies and graduation commencement exercises of their children; and

WHEREAS, the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana passed House Resolution No. 7 during the 2023 Regular Session in light of the foregoing recitations; and

WHEREAS, Daughters Beyond Incarceration has expressed the concern of children that their incarcerated parent is additionally unable to attend parent teacher conferences.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Department of Public Safety and Corrections to establish a policy not later than thirty days prior to the adjourning of the 2024 Regular Session of the Legislature to permit incarcerated parents at penal or correctional facilities under its jurisdiction to virtually attend award ceremonies, parent teacher conferences, and graduation commencement exercises at the request of the child.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Department of Public Safety and Corrections.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE