

2024 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 89

BY SENATOR CARTER

HEALTH CARE. Requests the Louisiana Department of Health to develop a plan for decreasing regulatory barriers for free-standing birth centers.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to work with stakeholders to
3 develop a plan for decreasing regulatory barriers for free-standing birth centers in
4 Louisiana.

5 WHEREAS, Louisiana has one of the highest incidences of maternal mortality and
6 preterm births in the nation; and

7 WHEREAS, Louisiana has limited obstetric health care in rural areas, where often
8 there are no obstetric providers and no hospitals or birth centers offering obstetric care; and

9 WHEREAS, Louisiana's maternal mortality rate of over fifty-eight deaths per one
10 hundred thousand births is the highest in the United States, with sixty-eight percent of
11 maternal deaths deemed preventable; and

12 WHEREAS, over thirty percent of Louisiana is considered a maternity desert with
13 little to no access to maternal care, affecting over two million women in Louisiana of
14 childbearing age and almost one hundred fifty thousand Louisiana babies; and

15 WHEREAS, Louisiana's maternal mortality rates are four times higher for black
16 women, with fifty-nine percent of black maternal deaths deemed preventable while nine
17 percent of white maternal deaths were deemed preventable; and

18 WHEREAS, a free-standing birth center is a facility, separate from a hospital, that

1 provides a home-like setting where midwives provide family-centered care to healthy
2 pregnant women; and

3 WHEREAS, these centers provide prenatal and postnatal care and natural delivery
4 services for females who have had a low risk, normal pregnancy and that are expected to
5 have an uncomplicated labor and normal delivery; and

6 WHEREAS, regulatory complexities represent a significant barrier to entry for new
7 birth centers and a substantial administrative strain on existing centers; and

8 WHEREAS, removing structural barriers by modernizing birth center licensing
9 regulations can address the issue of inequitable access to the birth center model of care.

10 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana
11 does hereby request the Louisiana Department of Health to work with stakeholders,
12 including but not limited to the Louisiana State Nurses Association, Louisiana Hospital
13 Association, administrators of free-standing birth centers, and the state senator for Senate
14 District 7, to develop a plan for decreasing regulatory barriers for free-standing birth centers
15 in Louisiana.

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

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

SR 89 Original

DIGEST
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Requests the Louisiana Department of Health to work with stakeholders to develop a plan
for decreasing regulatory barriers for free-standing birth centers in Louisiana.