

2024 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 60

BY REPRESENTATIVE JORDAN

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To authorize and request the House Committee on Judiciary and the Senate Committee on Judiciary B to meet and to function as a joint legislative committee to study and make recommendations with respect to the feasibility and practicality of mayor's courts and to report the findings of the joint committee to the legislature prior to the convening of the 2025 Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana.

WHEREAS, the mayor's courts of Louisiana have jurisdiction over violations of municipal ordinances and may impose fines, imprisonment, probation, and court costs as authorized in such ordinances; and

WHEREAS, a mayor's court jurisdiction is concurrent with the courts of record, which have such jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, a mayor's court may conduct trials, issue peace bonds, warrants, subpoenas, and summons, fix bail in criminal cases, and collect utility debts within the municipality when the amount in dispute does not exceed five thousand dollars; and

WHEREAS, mayor's courts exist in most municipalities, except where a city court has been established; and

WHEREAS, in 1972, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that having a mayor serve as judge is unfair to defendants if a town brings in a substantial part of its revenue through the court and if the mayor is responsible for the town's finances; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Judicial College advises towns with a mayor's court to appoint someone other than the mayor to act as judge if court collections account for at least ten percent of their overall revenue; and

WHEREAS, in 2022, of the three hundred one municipalities and two combined city-parish governments required to file audits, ninety-one of the municipalities with a mayor's court collected ten percent or more of their revenue through fines and forfeitures in a single year.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby authorize and request the House Committee on Judiciary and the Senate Committee on Judiciary B to meet and function as a joint legislative committee to study the feasibility and practicality of mayor's courts and to report the findings of the joint committee to the legislature prior to the convening of the 2025 Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that one print copy and one electronic copy of any report produced pursuant to this Resolution to the David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library as required by R.S. 24:772.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE