

2025 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 18

BY SENATOR MIZELL

SPECIAL DAY/WEEK/MONTH. Designates Monday, April 14, 2025, as Better Together-Children's Advocacy Centers and Court Appointed Special Advocate Day in Louisiana.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To designate Monday, April 14, 2025, as Better Together-Children's Advocacy Centers and  
3 Louisiana Court Appointed Special Advocate Day in Louisiana.

4 WHEREAS, Louisiana's Children's Advocacy Centers and Louisiana Court  
5 Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) programs have made valuable contributions to the  
6 state and have helped to make it a better place for children and families; and

7 WHEREAS, the month of April has been designated National Child Abuse  
8 Awareness Month, and studies show that one in ten children will experience sexual abuse  
9 before the age of eighteen; and

10 WHEREAS, Louisiana's Children's Advocacy Centers provide services to over seven  
11 thousand children each year for cases involving physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse,  
12 human trafficking, and children who have witnessed domestic violence and homicide; and

13 WHEREAS, each year, over five thousand children in the state experience abuse or  
14 neglect, ushering them into dependency of the court and foster care services; and

15 WHEREAS, Louisiana's Children's Advocacy Centers reach over forty-five thousand  
16 professionals and community members annually through education and awareness efforts  
17 for the prevention, identification, and reporting of child abuse; and

18 WHEREAS, the purpose of Louisiana's Children's Advocacy Centers is to provide

1 every child victim with a comfortable, child-friendly environment for forensic interviewing,  
2 victim advocacy, mental health, and other services to reduce further trauma to the child and  
3 promote healing; and

4 WHEREAS, Louisiana's Children's Advocacy Centers work with multidisciplinary  
5 teams of child abuse professionals to coordinate child abuse investigations and interventions,  
6 including district attorneys, Department of Children and Family Services, CASA programs,  
7 law enforcement agencies, mental health providers, and victim advocates; and

8 WHEREAS, Louisiana's Children's Advocacy Centers use evidence-based practices  
9 to support the well being of children, and research has demonstrated that these programs  
10 improve outcomes for children, reduce trauma for families, and save taxpayers money; and

11 WHEREAS, the Louisiana Alliance of Children's Advocacy Centers is the state  
12 chapter established for the empowerment, collaboration, and advocacy of Louisiana's  
13 Children's Advocacy Centers and provides a wide range of critical services to local centers;  
14 and

15 WHEREAS, Louisiana's Children's Advocacy Centers are a part of a network of nine  
16 hundred centers across the nation that serve over three hundred fifty thousand children  
17 annually, with eleven centers fully accredited with members in good standing with the  
18 National Children's Alliance and three centers on the path to national accreditation; and

19 WHEREAS, Louisiana CASA is the statewide association for the eighteen local  
20 CASA programs that raise awareness of the need for CASA across our state and provide  
21 support, training, resources, and oversight to maintain high-quality programs that serve  
22 children's best interest; and

23 WHEREAS, the mission of CASA is to give every child who is a victim of abuse or  
24 neglect an opportunity to thrive and establish permanence; and

25 WHEREAS, the local CASA programs work in courtrooms across all forty-two  
26 judicial districts and advocate for our state's most vulnerable children; and

27 WHEREAS, CASA programs in Louisiana, in association with the National CASA  
28 Association, speak for the best interest of abused and neglected children; and

29 WHEREAS, Louisiana's Children's Advocacy Centers and Louisiana CASA serve  
30 a vital function on a daily basis to protect and advocate for Louisiana's most vulnerable

