

Regular Session, 2014

HOUSE BILL NO. 802

BY REPRESENTATIVE BARROW

PUBLIC HEALTH: Establishes a task force on toxic mold

1 AN ACT

2 To enact Part LXXV of Chapter 5 of Title 40 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to
3 be comprised of R.S. 40:1300.381 through 1300.385, relative to toxic mold; to
4 provide for a task force to study the public health impacts of toxic mold in this state;
5 to provide for composition, functions, and duties of the task force; to terminate the
6 task force on a certain date; and to provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. Part LXXV of Chapter 5 of Title 40 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of
9 1950, comprised of R.S. 40:1300.381 through 1300.385, is hereby enacted to read as
10 follows:

11 PART LXXV. TOXIC MOLD TASK FORCE

12 §1300.381. Legislative findings; declaration

13 A. The legislature hereby finds the following:

14 (1) Certain forms of mold pose a severe and unacceptable risk to the
15 environment of Louisiana and the health of her people. Moreover, the legislature
16 finds that indoor toxins, specifically toxic mold, represent an insufficiently
17 understood health and environmental problem.

18 (2) The legislature recognizes that numerous studies indicate likely health
19 effects from mold spores, varying from cold-like symptoms to more serious
20 symptoms, such as allergy and asthma outbreaks. These toxins can have negative

1 effects on humans when ingested, inhaled, or when they come in contact with the
2 skin. These effects can have serious consequences for some population subgroups,
3 especially infants, children, pregnant women, the elderly, asthmatics, allergic
4 individuals, and individuals with compromised immune systems. Healthcare
5 professionals now acknowledge that molds can cause allergies, trigger asthma
6 attacks, detrimentally affect the function of vital human organs, and increase
7 susceptibility to colds and flu.

8 (3) The legislature further recognizes that though all molds are not toxic,
9 there are certain dangers that molds present within buildings and structures. It is thus
10 imperative that the toxicity of its presence be determined and a corresponding plan
11 of action be implemented to address such hazards in buildings and structures within
12 this state.

13 B. The legislature hereby declares that it is in the best interest of the public
14 health, welfare, and safety to establish a task force to lead development of
15 comprehensive policies and promote best practices concerning mitigation of toxic
16 mold and the adverse health effects caused by this unique threat to public health.

17 §1300.382. Definition

18 For the purposes of this Part, the term "mold" means any form of
19 multicellular fungi that live on plant or animal matter and in indoor environments.
20 Types of mold include but are not limited to cladosporium, alternaria, aspergillus,
21 trichoderma, memnoniella, mucor, and stachybotrys chartarum.

22 §1300.383. Toxic Mold Task Force; creation; composition; meetings

23 There is hereby created the Louisiana Toxic Mold Task Force, referred to
24 hereafter as the "task force", composed of eleven members as follows:

25 (1) One pediatric environmental health specialist selected and appointed by
26 the secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals.

27 (2) One person with expertise in toxicology selected and appointed by the
28 secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals.

1 (3) The assistant secretary of the office of public health of the Department
2 of Health and Hospitals or his designee.

3 (4) One member designated by the office of health affairs and medical
4 education of the Louisiana State University System.

5 (5) One member designated by the Louisiana State Medical Society.

6 (6) One member designated by the Louisiana Primary Care Association.

7 (7) One member with expertise in consumer protection designated by the
8 Louisiana Attorney General.

9 (8) One member designated by the Southern University Law Center.

10 (9) One member designated by the Paul M. Hebert Law Center of Louisiana
11 State University.

12 (10) One member with expertise in toxic mold remediation designated by the
13 State Licensing Board for Contractors.

14 (11) One member designated by the Louisiana Housing Corporation.

15 B. The secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals shall take such
16 actions as are necessary to ensure that the initial convening of the task force occurs
17 no later than October 1, 2014.

18 C. The task force members shall select a chairman annually and he shall
19 serve as chairman without salary.

20 D. Task force members shall serve without compensation, except per diem
21 or expense reimbursement to which they may be individually entitled by their
22 respective employer organizations.

23 E. The task force shall hold at least two regular meetings each year at a place
24 designated by the chairman.

25 §1300.384. Functions and duties of the task force

26 A. The functions of the task force shall include all of the following:

27 (1) Serve as an advisory body to the legislature on policies and practices that
28 protect all people of this state, particularly tenants, consumers, and vulnerable
29 populations, from harm related to toxic mold.

1 (2) Serve as a coordinating forum between and among state agencies, local
2 government, and nongovernmental groups on matters related to toxic mold.

3 (3) On a regular basis, research and review state regulations, guidelines,
4 policies, and procedures that pertain in any way to toxic mold and make
5 recommendations to the governor, the legislature, and the secretary of the
6 Department of Health and Hospitals as deemed necessary and appropriate by the
7 chairman.

8 B. On or before January 1, 2015, and annually thereafter, the task force shall
9 prepare and submit to the governor and the legislature a report on the status of public
10 health risks from toxic mold in Louisiana. The report shall include, without
11 limitation, the following:

12 (1) An assessment, based on scientific evidence, of the nature, scope and
13 magnitude of the adverse environmental and health impacts caused by toxic mold in
14 the state.

15 (2) Measurement, based on scientific evidence, of the adverse health effects
16 of exposure to molds on the general population, including specific effects on any
17 subgroups identifiable as being at greater risk of adverse health effects when exposed
18 to molds.

19 (3) Identification of actions taken by the state, local governments, and any
20 other public or private organizations that have made a positive impact on mitigating
21 the harm to public health of toxic mold.

22 (4) Identification of best practices for the control of mold in a cost-effective
23 and environmentally sound manner.

24 C. The task force may request administrative and technical support from the
25 Department of Health and Hospitals, office of public health to carry out the functions
26 and responsibilities provided in this Section.

27 §1300.385. Termination

28 The task force shall terminate on January 1, 2018.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

Barrow

HB No. 802

Abstract: Establishes a task force on toxic mold.

Proposed law provides a legislative declaration that it is in the best interest of the public health, welfare, and safety to establish a task force to lead development of comprehensive policies and promote best practices concerning mitigation of toxic mold and the adverse health effects caused by this unique threat to public health. Establishes the Louisiana Toxic Mold Task Force, comprised of the following eleven members:

- (1) One pediatric environmental health specialist selected and appointed by the secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH).
- (2) One person with expertise in toxicology selected and appointed by the secretary of DHH.
- (3) The assistant secretary of the office of public health of DHH or his designee.
- (4) One member designated by the office of health affairs and medical education of the Louisiana State University System.
- (5) One member designated by the La. State Medical Society.
- (6) One member designated by the La. Primary Care Association.
- (7) One member with expertise in consumer protection designated by the La. Attorney General.
- (8) One member designated by the Southern University Law Center.
- (9) One member designated by the Paul M. Hebert Law Center of Louisiana State University.
- (10) One member with expertise in toxic mold remediation designated by the State Licensing Board for Contractors.
- (11) One member designated by the La. Housing Corporation.

Proposed law provides that on or before Jan. 1, 2015, and annually thereafter, the task force shall prepare and submit to the governor and the legislature a report on the status of public health risks from toxic mold in La. Requires that the report include the following:

- (1) An assessment, based on scientific evidence, of the nature, scope and magnitude of the adverse environmental and health impacts caused by toxic mold in the state.
- (2) Measurement, based on scientific evidence, of the adverse health effects of exposure to molds on the general population, including specific effects on any subgroups identifiable as being at greater risk of adverse health effects when exposed to molds.

- (3) Identification of actions taken by the state, local governments, and any other public or private organizations that have made a positive impact on mitigating the harm to public health of toxic mold.
- (4) Identification of best practices for the control of mold in a cost-effective and environmentally sound manner.

Proposed law provides that the task force shall terminate on Jan. 1, 2018.

(Adds R.S. 40:1300.381-1300.385)