

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 71

BY SENATOR BROOME

A RESOLUTION

To commend the service and contributions of Magellan Youth Leaders Inspiring Future Empowerment, known as MY LIFE, and recognize Thursday, May 7, 2015, as "MY LIFE Youth Day" at the Louisiana State Capitol.

WHEREAS, behavioral health experts across the country now recognize that involving youth in the policies, programs, and systems that serve them improves outcomes for youth, helps them develop relationships, acquire new skills, improve behavior, build self-confidence, instill positive social supports, and cultivate leadership skills; and

WHEREAS, youth involvement in shaping policy and systems that serve them not only benefits the individual youth involved, but also can be very beneficial to those systems, agencies, communities, and the state as a whole; and

WHEREAS, Magellan Health Services created MY LIFE, now with 11 groups in five states with more than 500 youth regularly involved, as a free community program for youth between the ages of 13 and 23 who have experience with mental health, substance use, foster care-related and/or other challenges as a way to meet the need to involve youth in the systems that serve them; and

WHEREAS, through regular meetings, special events, presentations and performances, MY LIFE members provide support for their peers; develop critical skills in leadership, mentoring and mental health resiliency; act as advisors to Magellan and local officials to help improve services and systems that serve youth; and provide a much-needed voice in the community to combat the stigma associated with behavioral health issues; and

WHEREAS, in July 2012, MY LIFE Louisiana was established by Magellan Behavioral Health in Louisiana with MY LIFE groups started in Baton Rouge and Shreveport, and with an expansion group coming to Tangipahoa Parish; and

WHEREAS, MY LIFE Louisiana has had many great empowerment events for youth, including 42 monthly MY LIFE meetings averaging 35 attendees per meeting, as well as the annual MY Fest Louisiana event, last held on November 15, 2014, in downtown Baton Rouge where more than 1,200 attendees from across the state were educated about mental health, substance use, foster care, and juvenile justice-related issues in order to share resources, create awareness, and reduce stigma associated with these issues; and

WHEREAS, the second annual Louisiana MY LIFE Youth Day at the Capitol is being held on Thursday, May 7, 2015, which is also National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day, to bring youth from around the state to the Capitol to provide them a truly unique hands-on educational experience to learn about our state government process, interact with state legislators, and participate in other activities with a focus on empowering youth to develop leadership skills, social skills, and greater self-confidence; and

WHEREAS, MY LIFE Louisiana programs and activities have flourished due to the great support and partnerships of other youth serving organizations including the Louisiana Behavioral Health Partnership, Family Youth and Service Center, Goodwill of North Louisiana, Capital Area Human Services, Ekhaya Youth Project, Project BRAVE, City Year, Youth Oasis, B.R.A.C.E.S., Office of Juvenile Justice, VIP Project, faith-based groups, and other organizations.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend the service and contributions of MY LIFE (Magellan Youth Leaders Inspiring Future Empowerment) and does hereby recognize Thursday, May 7, 2015, as "MY LIFE Youth Day" at the Louisiana State Capitol.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to MY LIFE Louisiana.

---

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE