

1 operated as part of the Earl K. Long Medical Center and kept patients with mental illness
2 from congesting hospital emergency departments and jails; and

3 WHEREAS, the MHERE was a type of crisis receiving center in which a staff of
4 mental health and behavioral health specialists provided a high level of screening and
5 assessment to people experiencing mental health or behavioral health crises; and

6 WHEREAS, the MHERE functioned to connect patients experiencing mental health
7 or behavioral health crises to either acute or ongoing community-based treatment;
8 diminished the need in the city and region for recurrent crisis services for persons suffering
9 from mental illness, substance abuse, or both conditions; and served as a crisis continuum
10 component that assisted law enforcement officers, hospital emergency departments, and jails
11 by treating persons with mental health and behavioral health conditions in an appropriate
12 setting; and

13 WHEREAS, since the closure of the Baton Rouge MHERE, public officials,
14 community leaders, and public health advocates throughout the capital region have
15 increasingly expressed concerns over the inadequacy of resources available for treatment of
16 persons with mental health and behavioral health conditions, with these concerns relating
17 equally to the well-being of persons whose critical health needs are going unmet and to the
18 mounting financial burdens that hospitals and detention facilities have incurred through
19 confining these persons in such costly settings.

20 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
21 urge and request the Capital Area Human Services District to conduct a study of systems for
22 providing appropriate mental health and behavioral health treatment in the capital region as
23 an alternative to hospitalization or detention in jails or other correctional facilities of persons
24 in mental health or behavioral health crisis.

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study and its resulting report shall address,
26 without limitation, the following:

27 (1) Whether creation and maintenance of a system for providing appropriate mental
28 health and behavioral health treatment in the capital region could be accomplished within
29 the limits of the existing financial resources and healthcare infrastructure of the region.

