

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 115

BY SENATORS COLOMB, BARROW, HEWITT, MIZELL AND PETERSON AND REPRESENTATIVES AMEDEE, CARPENTER, DAVIS, EMERSON, HILFERTY, HILL, HODGES, HORTON, JACKSON, NANCY LANDRY, MARCELLE, MORENO, NORTON, SMITH, STOKES AND WHITE

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To commend the Iris Domestic Violence Center upon its receipt of a 2016 Women of Excellence Award from the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus Foundation in the category of Non-Profit of Excellence.

WHEREAS, the mission of Iris Domestic Violence Center of Baton Rouge is to protect and empower survivors, prevent relationship violence, and promote justice for victims of domestic violence and dating violence, their children, and our communities; and

WHEREAS, the center fields approximately seven thousand 24-hour crisis line calls annually, approximately 4,800 victims of domestic violence receive services annually, approximately 1,300 domestic violence survivors receive emergency shelter services, and 3,000 receive legal and nonresidential services; and

WHEREAS, Iris also assists with securing approximately 4,000 protective orders for victims of domestic violence and their children; and

WHEREAS, for more than thirty-five years, the center has provided professional, compassionate, and empowering support to battered women and their children in the Capital Area as the oldest and one of the largest nonprofit domestic violence organizations in Louisiana which serves seven parishes - East Baton Rouge, West Baton Rouge, Iberville, Ascension, Pointe Coupee, East Feliciana and West Feliciana, and a total population of 663,255; and

WHEREAS, in 1978, following a year-long study of family violence in the Baton Rouge area, Baton Rouge Mayor-President Woody Dumas' Commission on the Needs of Women began a limited domestic violence project using federal, state, and local funding; in 1981, a nonprofit Domestic Violence Corporation was formed to purchase and renovate a facility in Baton Rouge for the purpose of operating Emergency Shelter for Battered Women Capital Area Family Violence Intervention Center (CAFVIC), Incorporated which was then

incorporated as a nonprofit charitable organization; in 1982, a 24-Hour 7 day/week crisis hotline became operational and support groups were started as well as child care and transportation services; in 1986, the agency began a weekly support group at the Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women in St. Gabriel that operates to this day; in 1988, the agency renovated its current 17,545 square feet, two-story emergency shelter facility, with a 25-bed capacity; in 1990, bed space was increased to thirty-six and the shelter now has a bed capacity to accommodate fifty women and children; and in 1995, the program opened its first full-time outreach office in Gonzales to serve residents of Ascension Parish; and

WHEREAS, in 2013, CAFVIC began doing business as Iris Domestic Violence Center, the new name being based on the hardy flowers, native to Louisiana, that grow in gardens, swamps, and fields across the state, and its purple color is the domestic violence awareness color; the Iris is known for being tough and resilient, continuing to bloom year after year - an appropriate metaphor for survivors of domestic violence served by the center; and

WHEREAS, today, Iris employs twenty-two full-time staff and three contract attorneys; has over two hundred active volunteers and volunteer organizations, operates a 24-hour Crisis Hotline, a residential emergency shelter and a wide range of support services to survivors of domestic violence and their children including adult advocacy, legal advocacy, legal assistance, child support services, outreach, education and training, and operates four domestic violence outreach offices in Baton Rouge, Gonzales, Plaquemine and Port Allen free of charge; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus Foundation created the Women of Excellence Awards to recognize and honor extraordinary women of excellence across the state for their outstanding achievements and contributions; and

WHEREAS, recipients of the Women of Excellence Awards exhibit characteristics of integrity and professionalism, personify excellence in their area of specialty, and are committed to community service to better society as a whole; and

WHEREAS, for 2016, there are four categories for the Women of Excellence Awards: College Women of Excellence, High School Women of Excellence, Louisiana Hero of Excellence, and Non-Profit of Excellence; and

WHEREAS, the recipients of the 2016 Women of Excellence Awards are being recognized at the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus Foundation's Women of Excellence Awards & Scholarships Ceremony and Reception on Tuesday, May 24, 2016; and

WHEREAS, the Iris Domestic Violence Center has been named a recipient of a 2016 Women of Excellence Award in the category of Non-Profit of Excellence for its work to improve and strengthen the lives of women in Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, the Iris Domestic Violence Center merits a sincere and heartfelt measure of commendation for its dedication to excellence and outstanding accomplishments, and it is appropriate for the Legislature of Louisiana to commend the Iris Domestic Violence Center upon its receipt of a 2016 Women of Excellence Award from the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus Foundation and to recognize its vital contributions to the citizens of Louisiana.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend the Iris Domestic Violence Center upon its receipt of a 2016 Women of Excellence Award from the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus Foundation in the category of Non-Profit of Excellence; does hereby recognize and record for posterity its singular contributions to the citizens of Louisiana; and does hereby extend enduring appreciation for the tremendous pride and honor that the Iris Domestic Violence Center brings to the state of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Iris Domestic Violence Center.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES