

BY REPRESENTATIVE LEGER

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the Institute for Public Health and Justice and the Department of Public

3 Safety and Corrections to study the impact of behavioral health issues, including

4 mental illnesses, substance abuse disorders, and developmental disabilities, in the

5 criminal justice system.

6 WHEREAS, studies have shown that people who suffer from mental illnesses,

7 substance abuse disorders, and developmental disabilities are more likely to enter into the

8 criminal justice system when they are not given timely access to quality behavioral health

9 services in their communities; and

10 WHEREAS, national studies indicate that the rates of mental illness are consistently

11 higher in the criminal justice system; and

12 WHEREAS, pretrial inmates represent the largest and fastest growing segment of the

13 United States jail population, and nearly one in five of these inmates suffers from a mental

14 illness; and

15 WHEREAS, the number of adults served by Louisiana community behavioral health

16 programs was reduced by half between 2012 and 2015; and

17 WHEREAS, between 2012 and 2015, the number of adults served in Louisiana

18 psychiatric hospitals dropped to thirty-six percent; and

19 WHEREAS, thirteen percent of inmates housed in Louisiana state operated prisons

20 are diagnosed with a serious mental illness; and

1 WHEREAS, it is important to understand the needs of Louisiana residents who suffer
2 from serious mental illnesses and substance abuse disorders, to assess the ability of the
3 state's health system to effectively meet the needs of Louisiana residents, and to better
4 understand the impact of untreated mental illnesses and substance abuse disorders; and

5 WHEREAS, the state of Louisiana recognizes that an effective criminal justice
6 system should be based on public safety, accountability, and rehabilitation.

7 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
8 urge and request the Institute for Public Health and Justice and the Department of Public
9 Safety and Corrections to study the impact of behavioral health issues in the criminal justice
10 system.

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, in this regard, the Institute for Public Health and
12 Justice and the Department of Public Safety and Corrections may work with and receive
13 information from various stakeholders in the criminal justice system and behavioral health
14 systems, including but not limited to representatives from the Department of Health, office
15 of behavioral health, the Mental Health Advocacy Service, the National Alliance on Mental
16 Illness, the Louisiana District Judges Association, the Louisiana District Attorneys
17 Association, the Louisiana Public Defender Board, the Louisiana Sheriff's Association, the
18 Louisiana Association of Chiefs of Police, the Louisiana Licensed Professional Counselors
19 Board of Examiners, the Louisiana Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, the
20 Louisiana Counseling Association, the Department of Education, the Department of Health,
21 the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists, the Louisiana Psychological
22 Association, the Louisiana Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, the
23 Louisiana Association of Clinical Social Workers, the Louisiana Hospital Association, and
24 the Louisiana Human Service District/Authority.

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Institute for Public Health and Justice and
26 the Department of Public Safety and Corrections may also study relevant case law to better
27 understand the impact of behavioral health problems in the criminal justice system.

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that suitable copies of this Resolution be transmitted
29 to the Institute for Public Health and Justice and the Department of Public Safety and
30 Corrections.

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)]

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Leger

Urges and requests the Institute for Public Health and Justice and the Dept. of Public Safety and Corrections to study behavioral health issues in the criminal justice system.