

2018 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 180

BY REPRESENTATIVE HUNTER

A RESOLUTION

To recognize the potential value for local law enforcement agencies of an independent police monitor.

WHEREAS, local law enforcement officers, both sheriff's deputies and municipal police officers, are, as they have always been, the essential guardians of the safety of communities; they are the critical barrier between the few who wish to cause harm and the many who wish to go about their daily activities free from fear; and

WHEREAS, effective policing requires effective community support; policing is not done in a vacuum; if civilians are to be as safe as possible they must work collaboratively with law enforcement officers and agencies, but if citizens come to perceive law enforcement officers to be as much of a threat to their safety as are criminals, the health of the community deteriorates rapidly; and

WHEREAS, though citizens and local elected officials desire to hold sheriff's deputies and municipal police officers to very high standards of integrity and service, many aspects of a law enforcement agency are unique to the law enforcement field, and special expertise is required to evaluate and improve internal practices, procedures, and culture; general management experts and local officials may not be in the best position to determine whether a particular department is fulfilling its duties in a way that meets such high standards; and

WHEREAS, an independent police monitor can fill that gap by combining law enforcement expertise with an outside-the-department perspective, thereby playing a role that neither a member of the department nor a traditional government executive or inspector general can play; and

WHEREAS, responsibilities of an independent police monitor can include: monitoring civilian and internal complaints, internal investigations, and discipline; reviewing the classification of all internal investigations and requiring that investigations be reopened; reporting to elected officials and the public on the effectiveness of the department; compiling and reporting on data to identify officers, units, and precincts that have been commended for exceptional work; reviewing training schedules and content and identifying and insisting on the adoption of best practices with respect to training; and

WHEREAS, in short, an independent police monitor can forge the required trust and collaboration between a law enforcement agency and the citizens of a community by cultivating an agency that strives for superior community service in every facet of life in a local law enforcement agency, including hiring and promotion, training, discipline, interagency cooperation, and community outreach.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby recognize the potential value for local law enforcement agencies of an independent police monitor and does hereby encourage parish and municipal governing authorities to consider the advantages of such a position for its respective sheriff's office or police department.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Louisiana Municipal Association and the Police Jury Association of Louisiana for distribution to their respective local government membership.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES