

2019 Regular Session

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 18

BY SENATOR MORRELL

JUVENILE JUSTICE. Provides for a Task Force on Secure Care Standards and Auditing.

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A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To provide relative to the Task Force on Secure Care Standards and Auditing to assist in development and implementation of standards and procedures in the operation and audit of secure care facilities in the state.

WHEREAS, Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 38 of the 2017 Regular Session of the Legislature created the Task Force on Secure Care Standards and Auditing and provided that it be abolished on February 1, 2019; and

WHEREAS, youth who have been adjudicated delinquent and youth determined to be a risk to public safety or are unable to be treated in less restrictive settings are placed in secure care facilities for treatment and rehabilitation; and

WHEREAS, secure care facilities provide a range of moderate to high security levels with staff supervision designed to restrict resident activities with twenty-four hour control over one's ability to enter and leave the facility; and

WHEREAS, four secure care facilities currently operate in the state – Swanson Center for Youth in Monroe, Swanson Center for Youth in Columbia, Bridge City Center for Youth, and Ware Youth Center Intensive Residential Program, and a fifth facility is under construction in Bunkie; and

WHEREAS, in 2018 a comprehensive audit conducted by the Legislative Auditor

1 determined that the office of juvenile justice failed to conduct quality assurance audits of
2 secure care facilities from 2010 to 2015 and that the office failed to timely correct 51.9% and
3 49.1% of safety-related items identified in quality assurance audits conducted for 2016 and
4 2017, respectively; and

5 WHEREAS, prior to February 1, 2019, the office of juvenile justice was
6 promulgating recommendations of the Task Force on Secure Care Standards and Auditing
7 to provide standards in line with nationally recognized and accepted best practice standards
8 for care, treatment, and rehabilitation of youth in secure care facilities; and

9 WHEREAS, to continue providing technical assistance relative to recommendations
10 and potential legislation as made by the task force created by SCR 38 of the 2017 Regular
11 Session, a new Task Force on Secure Care Standards and Auditing should be created and
12 comprised of the same members as the task force created pursuant to SCR 38 of the 2017
13 Regular Session.

14 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
15 create the Task Force on Secure Standards and Auditing comprised of the same following
16 members as that task force created pursuant to SCR 38 of the 2017 Regular Session:

17 (1) The deputy secretary of the office of juvenile justice, or his designee.

18 (2) The president of the Louisiana Juvenile Detention Association, or his designee.

19 (3) The director of the Louisiana Center for Children's Rights, or his designee.

20 (4) The secretary of the Department of Children and Family Services, or her
21 designee.

22 (5) The secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health, or her designee.

23 (6) The executive director of the Advocacy Center of Louisiana, or his designee.

24 (7) The statewide director of the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiatives, or his
25 designee.

26 (8) An expert in assessing conditions of confinement in juvenile facilities for the
27 purpose of ensuring the safety and well-being of youth and the effect of incarceration on
28 adolescents and young adults, appointed by the chairman of the task force.

29 (9) An attorney with experience representing children, appointed by the director of
30 the Mental Health Advocacy Service.

- 1 (10) The executive director of Justice for Families, or her designee.
- 2 (11) The executive director of Families and Friends of Louisiana's Incarcerated
- 3 Children, or her designee.
- 4 (12) Two people formerly incarcerated in a Louisiana secure care facility, appointed
- 5 by the Louisiana Youth Justice Coalition.
- 6 (13) Two parents of children currently or formerly incarcerated in a Louisiana secure
- 7 care facility, appointed by the executive director of Justice for Families.
- 8 (14) Two people working as juvenile justice specialists in secure care facilities,
- 9 appointed by the office of juvenile justice.
- 10 (15) The senior supervising attorney for the Louisiana Southern Poverty Law Center,
- 11 or her designee.
- 12 (16) The Louisiana Legislative Auditor, or his designee.
- 13 (17) The president of the Senate, or his designee.
- 14 (18) The speaker of the House of Representatives, or his designee.
- 15 (19) The governor, or his designee.
- 16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that task force members shall serve without
- 17 compensation or reimbursement of expenses, other than what may be afforded by their
- 18 appointing authority; legislative members of the task force shall receive the same per diem
- 19 and reimbursement of travel expenses as provided for attendance at legislative committee
- 20 meetings under the rules of the respective house in which they serve.
- 21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a majority of the membership of the task force
- 22 constitutes a quorum and that if all task force members have not been appointed by
- 23 September 1, 2019, a majority of the appointed membership shall constitute a quorum.
- 24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force may oversee implementation of
- 25 recommendations concerning standards and audits of secure care facilities, including but not
- 26 limited to:
- 27 (1) Recommendations to support imposition of standards and estimated costs
- 28 incurred by the office of juvenile justice.
- 29 (2) The implementation of prior recommendations made by the task force.
- 30 (3) The appropriation of funds may be required to implement recommendations.

1 (4) Legislation needed to support and provide for task force recommendations,
2 including the creation of an auditing process and necessary statutory changes to improve the
3 functions and activities of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act Implementation Committee.

4 (5) The discontinuation of the user-pay telephone system.

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that standards and recommendations promulgated
6 by the office of juvenile justice apply to all secure care facilities and placements including
7 at Swanson Center for Youth in Monroe, Swanson Center for Youth in Columbia, Bridge
8 City Center for Youth, the Ware Youth Center Intensive Residential Program, and any future
9 secure care facilities or placements for youth in the custody of the office of juvenile justice.

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall elect a chairman from its
11 membership.

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the office of juvenile justice and all contracting
13 facilities and agencies shall cooperate and provide such information and assistance as may
14 be necessary to accomplish the goals and objectives of the task force and that the task force
15 may seek administrative assistance and staff support from the Louisiana Youth Justice
16 Coalition as may be necessary.

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that no later than September 1, 2019, the office of
18 juvenile justice shall produce an estimate of the cost to implement the standards
19 recommended by the task force.

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that no later than November 15, 2019, the task force
21 shall prepare and deliver a written report of its findings and recommendations to the
22 governor, the legislature, the office of juvenile justice, and the Legislative Auditor which
23 report shall include any proposed legislation and the establishment of a schedule and process
24 for conducting regular audits of secure care facilities.

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that no later than November 15, 2020, the task force
26 shall prepare a written report of its findings and recommendations, including a status report
27 on the implementation of the standards and an ongoing auditing process to the governor,
28 legislature, the office of juvenile justice, and the Legislative Auditor.

29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force on Secure Care Standards and
30 Auditing shall be abolished on June 30, 2021.

