HLS 20RS-1356 ORIGINAL

2020 Regular Session

1

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 46

BY REPRESENTATIVE JONES

CORRECTIONS: Requests the Department of Public Safety and Corrections to study certain impacts as a result of COVID-19

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2	To urge and request the Department of Public Safety and Corrections to study the impact of
3	COVID-19 on its operations, specifically as it pertains to the safety and security of
4	inmates and staff at its facilities, as well as the feasibility of releasing nonviolent
5	offenders and its impact on mitigating the spread of COVID-19, and to report the
6	number of inmates and staff that have died as a result of COVID-19.
7	WHEREAS, in February 2020, the Department of Public Safety and Corrections
8	released a letter to its staff and state prison offenders regarding the implementation of
9	policies and procedures of inquiring with staff and all visitors about any symptoms related
10	to COVID-19 and recent travel; and
11	WHEREAS, according to the policies, if a person presented any symptoms, such as
12	fever, persistent cough, or shortness of breath, or recently traveled to or from certain
13	locations, an additional risk screening was performed and the person may have been denied
14	access to the prison until symptoms subsided; and
15	WHEREAS, for the safety and security of the inmates and staff in the eight state
16	prisons, the Department of Public Safety and Corrections suspended visitations, tours, and
17	volunteer work; and
18	WHEREAS, in lieu of visitation, the Department of Public Safety and Corrections
19	worked to expand access to telephone services to ensure inmates had continued access to
20	family and friends during the pandemic; and

1	WHEREAS, the Department of Public Safety and Corrections also worked to secure
2	hygiene and protection supplies, such as soap, masks, and gloves; and
3	WHEREAS, each state prison identified areas to quarantine the incarcerated
4	population of the Department of Public Safety and Corrections; and
5	WHEREAS, on March 28, 2020, the Department of Public Safety and Corrections
6	reported its first confirmed case of COVID-19 within its prisons; and according to the
7	Department of Public Safety and Corrections, there were thirty-nine COVID-19 positive
8	inmates and thirty-six COVID-19 positive staff members as of April 9, 2020; and
9	WHEREAS, it is necessary for the Department of Public Safety and Corrections to
10	study the release of certain nonviolent offenders from its custody during a declared state of
11	emergency and public health emergency in order to reduce the number of positive cases in
12	the prison population; and
13	WHEREAS, it is important for the Department of Public Safety and Corrections to
14	strive to maintain the safety, security, and well-being of its inmate population and staff and
15	to take necessary precautions to mitigate any potential spread of COVID-19.
16	THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
17	urge and request the Department of Public Safety and Corrections to study the impact of
18	COVID-19 on its operations, specifically as it pertains to the safety and security of inmates
19	and staff at its facilities, as well as the feasibility of releasing nonviolent offenders and its
20	impact on mitigating the spread of COVID-19, and to report the number of inmates and staff
21	that have died as a result of COVID-19.
22	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Public Safety and Corrections
23	shall report its findings to the legislature no later than January 1, 2021.
24	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted
25	to the secretary of the Department of Public Safety and Corrections.

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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)]

HCR 46 Original

2020 Regular Session

Jones

Requests the Dept. of Public Safety and Corrections to study the impact of COVID-19 on its operations, specifically as it pertains to the safety and security of inmates and staff at its facilities, as well as the feasibility of releasing nonviolent offenders and its impact on mitigating the spread of COVID-19, and to report the number of inmates and staff that have died as a result of COVID-19.