

2020 Second Extraordinary Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 42

BY SENATOR MIZELL

CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES. Authorizes and directs the re-creation of the Louisiana Women's Incarceration Task Force.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To authorize and direct the re-creation of the Louisiana Women's Incarceration Task Force
3 under the jurisdiction of the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus and the
4 Department of Public Safety & Corrections as originally created by HCR 27 of the
5 2018 Regular Session and continued by HCR 37 of the 2019 Regular Session and
6 grant them new authority to study, evaluate, analyze, and undertake a comprehensive
7 review of the state's and local municipal criminal justice systems as it relates to
8 prenatal and postpartum care of incarcerated pregnant women and the need for
9 babies to bond with their mothers and to report its findings and policy
10 recommendations by February 1, 2021.

11 WHEREAS, over the last several years, Louisiana has built upon the success of the
12 justice reinvestment task force while recognizing that incarcerated women face unique
13 challenges and therefore may or may not benefit from reform efforts; and

14 WHEREAS, according to United States Bureau of Justice Statistics in 2017,
15 Louisiana had the seventh highest women's incarceration rate in the United States and
16 incarcerated more than two thousand women at a cost of over \$50 million; and

17 WHEREAS, the most effective changes will be made when all those impacted or
18 involved in the criminal justice system have representation in developing policies and

1 processes related to women's incarceration, and input from all criminal justice stakeholders
2 is essential in the development and implementation of these changes; and

3 WHEREAS, it is beneficial to the entire population of the state of Louisiana to
4 develop a broadly diverse and cross-disciplinary task force to study correction systems for
5 women with the goal of producing a body of research resulting in making specific policy
6 recommendations to implement placement and behavioral practices which address prenatal
7 and postpartum care of incarcerated pregnant women and the need for babies to bond with
8 their mothers.

9 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana
10 does hereby authorize and direct the recreation of the Louisiana Women's Incarceration Task
11 Force.

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force is hereby authorized and directed
13 to study, evaluate, analyze, and undertake a comprehensive review of the state's and local
14 municipal criminal justice systems as it relates to prenatal and postpartum care of pregnant
15 incarcerated women and the need for babies to bond with their mothers. The information
16 gathered shall be used to develop policy recommendations for the Senate to:

17 (1) Develop practices and processes that avoid placing additional trauma or harm
18 upon pregnant women as they navigate the criminal justice system.

19 (2) Address the holistic health of women to include access to hormone therapy,
20 prenatal care, reproductive health, access to other medicine to maintain health, consistent
21 health screenings, mental health access, and access to substance use and recovery resources.

22 (3) Increase and evaluate programming available to pregnant women during and after
23 incarceration with the intention of self-determined development.

24 (4) Ensure the availability of gender responsive resources to support the dignity and
25 quality of life of all women.

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall be bipartisan and shall be
27 composed of the following members:

28 (1) Three representatives of criminal justice agencies designated by the governor.

29 (2) The secretary of the Department of Public Safety & Corrections, or his designee.

30 (3) The president of the Louisiana Senate, or his designee who shall be a senator.

1 (4) Chair of the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus.

2 (5) A physician specializing in OB/GYN designated by Our Lady of the Lake
3 Hospital.

4 (6) A nurse specializing in obstetrics designated by Woman's Hospital.

5 (7) A representative of the GRACE Program at Women's Hospital.

6 (8) The president of the Louisiana Sheriffs' Association, or his designee.

7 (9) The president of the Louisiana District Attorneys' Association, or his designee.

8 The chair of the task force shall be the secretary of the Department of Public Safety
9 & Corrections, or his designee. All other officers, if any, shall be elected by and from the
10 membership of the task force.

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a majority of the membership of the task force
12 shall constitute a quorum and shall meet at predetermined and agreed upon dates by the task
13 force, enforced by the chairman, or upon an affirmative vote of a majority of the task force
14 members. All members must be notified in writing of all meetings at least two weeks before
15 the date on which a meeting of the task force is scheduled.

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus and
17 the Department of Public Safety & Corrections shall provide the administrative assistance
18 and staffing as may be necessary in order to enable the task force to accomplish its goals.

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force may request the Louisiana
20 Legislative Women's Caucus, the Department of Public Safety & Corrections, and the office
21 of the judicial administrator of the Louisiana Supreme Court to provide relevant data and
22 staff expertise upon request.

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall meet no less than two times
24 prior to the start of the 2021 Regular Legislative Session. The initial meeting of the task
25 force shall be called by the president of the Louisiana Senate. The first meeting shall take
26 place no later than November 15, 2020.

27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall prepare and submit a final
28 report that contains a detailed statement of the findings and policy recommendations of the
29 task force to the governor, president of the Louisiana Senate, and the chief justice of the
30 Louisiana Supreme Court by February 15, 2021. The report shall be made available to the

1 public.

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
3 governor, the secretary of the Department of Public Safety & Corrections, the chief medical
4 officer of Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center, the chief of nursing at Woman's
5 Hospital, the president of the Louisiana Sheriffs' Association, and the president of the
6 District Attorneys' Association.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Michael Bell.

DIGEST

SR 42 Original

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