

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 13

BY SENATOR HENRY

A RESOLUTION

To designate Monday, April 19, 2021, as Child Advocacy Center (CAC) Day in Louisiana.

WHEREAS, Louisiana's Child Advocacy Centers have made valuable contributions to the state and have helped to make the state a better place for children and families; and

WHEREAS, with the establishment of the Jefferson Children's Advocacy Center in Gretna, Louisiana, in 1991, this year, 2021, marks the thirtieth anniversary for Child Advocacy Centers in Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, April has been designated National Child Abuse Prevention Month; and

WHEREAS, one in ten children will experience sexual abuse before age eighteen; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana's Child Advocacy Centers provide services to over 5,000 children each year in the sixty-four parishes of this state for cases involving physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, human trafficking, and children who have witnessed domestic violence and homicide; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana's Child Advocacy Centers reach over 23,000 professionals and community members annually through education and awareness efforts for the prevention, identification, and reporting of child abuse; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of Louisiana's Child Advocacy Centers is to provide every child victim referred to CAC a comfortable, child-friendly environment for forensic interviewing, victim advocacy, mental health, and other services in order to reduce further trauma to the child and promote healing; and

WHEREAS, Child Advocacy Centers work with multidisciplinary teams of child abuse professionals to coordinate child abuse investigation and intervention, including district attorneys, Department of Children and Family Services, various law enforcement agencies, medical and mental health providers, and victim advocates; and

WHEREAS, CACs use evidence-based practices to support child well-being, and that research has demonstrated these programs improve outcomes for children, reduce trauma for families, and save taxpayer money; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Alliance of Children's Advocacy Centers are the state chapter established for the empowerment, collaboration, and advocacy of Louisiana's Child Advocacy Centers and provides a wide range of critical services to local member centers, including training, technical assistance, data collection, and advocacy; and

WHEREAS, with ten centers that are currently fully accredited members in good standing with the National Children's Alliance, and five centers on the path to national accreditation, Louisiana's Child Advocacy Centers are a part of a network of over nine hundred centers across the nation which serve over 350,000 children annually.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby designate Monday, April 19, 2021, as Child Advocacy Center (CAC) Day in Louisiana and does hereby commend the dedication and excellent work of the CACs and their staff on behalf of the citizens of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Louisiana Alliance of Children's Advocacy Centers Board President, Joelle Henderson, and Executive Director, Kate Shipley.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE