

2021 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 15

BY REPRESENTATIVE HUGHES

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Juvenile Justice Reform Act Implementation Commission to use its authority to oversee a study of local education agency budgets to analyze and make available to the public information about how school districts are spending local, state, and federal education funds, in particular, how these funds are spent on measures that support students and their learning compared to measures that punish and criminalize students.

WHEREAS, data and information about local education agency budgets is not consistently or readily available to communities across Louisiana, and communities should understand and be engaged in how public funds are spent in their schools; and

WHEREAS, it is critical that public funds are spent on measures that are found to support students, like counselors, school nurses, and other health and mental health professionals, instead of measures that are found to harm and criminalize students, like increased school resource officer and law enforcement presence; and

WHEREAS, R.S. 46:2755 provides the commission the authority to conduct any study it finds necessary to effect its purpose; and

WHEREAS, R.S. 46:2754 provides the commission the authority to request research and assistance from private research agencies, consulting groups, individuals, and organizations, universities, and others, and may use such research and assistance to conduct this study; and

WHEREAS, the commission has among its power and duties monitoring and evaluating juvenile justice and making recommendations for juvenile justice, and assessing the roles and interaction of federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies and entities in combating juvenile delinquency to make recommendations for improving their effectiveness; and

WHEREAS, ensuring students can remain in their classrooms and learning, rather than facing referrals to law enforcement, arrest, or justice system involvement is the most effective way to combat juvenile delinquency; and

WHEREAS, students, educators, administrators, schools, and communities will all be better served by investing public funds in the best practices that contribute to positive, safe, and healthy learning environments that support students; and

WHEREAS, too often Louisiana schools appear to prioritize spending funds on law enforcement and school resource officers rather than school counselors, nurses, and other health and mental health professionals, and school communities should have better access to and far greater input on these budgetary decisions.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Juvenile Justice Reform Act Implementation Commission to oversee a study of local education agency budgets to analyze and make available to the public information about how school districts are spending local, state, and federal education funds, in particular, how these funds are spent on measures that support students and their learning compared to measures that punish and criminalize students.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall submit a publicly available, written report containing its findings and recommendations to the legislature and governor, pursuant to R.S. 46:2756, not later than March 1, 2022.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the chair of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act Implementation Commission.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE