HLS 21RS-3054 ENGROSSED

2021 Regular Session

1

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 97

BY REPRESENTATIVE JONES

PARDON/PAROLE: Requests a study of case law and best practices to better understand other approaches to parole

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2	To urge and request that the Voice of the Experienced, the Louisiana Parole Project, the
3	Promise of Justice Initiative, Louisiana Survivors for Reform, and the Parole and
4	Re-entry Clinic at Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center study the
5	history of parole in Louisiana, analyze current parole laws and regulations, and
6	report their findings to the Legislature of Louisiana no later then February 1, 2022.
7	WHEREAS, the state of Louisiana has the highest incarceration rate in the country,
8	with approximately thirty thousand individuals in state prison; and
9	WHEREAS, the average age of those in prison is forty and one-half years; and
10	WHEREAS, one of every five persons in Louisiana prisons is serving life without
11	the possibility of parole; and
12	WHEREAS, in addition, Louisiana has tens of thousands of individuals under parole
13	supervision; and
14	WHEREAS, the Legislature of Louisiana entered into a bi-partisan justice
15	reinvestment process, as advanced by the Justice Reinvestment Initiative, that resulted in
16	legislation to decrease Louisiana's prison population and to end Louisiana's title as the state
17	with the highest incarceration rate in the country; and
18	WHEREAS, Louisiana has decreased its prison population, but not enough to change
19	its title as the state with the highest incarceration rate; and
20	WHEREAS, the national prison population decreased three percent between 2019
21	and 2020, while Louisiana's prison population decreased two point four percent; and

1	WHEREAS, the Legislature of Louisiana has made many reforms to the state's parole
2	system, including reforms passed as part of the 2017 justice reinvestment legislation; and
3	WHEREAS, the Justice Reinvestment Initiative also sought to reduce the number of
4	individuals on supervised release and reduce the caseload of probation and parole officers;
5	and
6	WHEREAS, despite the success of the Justice Reinvestment Initiative, Louisiana still
7	provides unequal parole opportunities due to conflicting laws; and
8	WHEREAS, Louisiana's laws have developed over centuries and have become
9	inconsistent; and
10	WHEREAS, there is a collection of state laws that govern parole eligibility; and
11	WHEREAS, states across the country are looking to reform their parole systems to
12	ensure these systems are equitable and just; and
13	WHEREAS, Voice of the Experienced is a Louisiana membership organization
14	established by and for persons who are directly impacted by the criminal justice system,
15	including incarcerated persons and their family members, persons under community
16	supervision, and persons living with the lifelong impacts of criminal convictions; and
17	WHEREAS, the Louisiana Parole Project is a non-profit organization working to
18	enhance public safety through advocacy, programming, and services for persons who have
19	served long prison sentences so that they may reach their full potential; and
20	WHEREAS, the Promise of Justice Initiative is a non-profit organization working
21	to create positive change for individuals in the criminal legal system at the intersection of
22	impact litigation, direct services, and community engagement; and
23	WHEREAS, Louisiana Survivors for Reform is a coalition of crime survivors,
24	families of homicide victims, and organizations creating change in the criminal justice
25	system; and
26	WHEREAS, the Parole and Re-entry Clinic at Louisiana State University Paul M.
27	Hebert Law Center provides law students the opportunity to represent and assist individuals
28	in parole and pardon matters.

1	THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
2	urge and request Voice of the Experienced, the Louisiana Parole Project, the Promise of
3	Justice Initiative, Louisiana Survivors for Reform, and the Parole and Re-entry Clinic at
4	Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center to study the history of parole in
5	Louisiana, analyze current parole laws and regulations, and propose recommendations to
6	create a more uniform parole system.
7	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Voice of the Experienced, the Louisiana Parole
8	Project, the Promise of Justice Initiative, Louisiana Survivors for Reform, and the Parole and
9	Re-entry Clinic at Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center may work with
10	and receive information from various stakeholders in the criminal justice system, including
11	but not limited to representatives of the Department of Public Safety and Corrections, the
12	Board of Pardons, the Louisiana District Attorneys Association, the committee on parole,
13	and other relevant state agencies and institutions.
14	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Voice of the Experienced, the Louisiana Parole
15	Project, the Promise of Justice Initiative, Louisiana Survivors for Reform, and the Parole and
16	Re-entry Clinic at Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center may also study
17	relevant case law and best practices to better understand other approaches to parole in the
18	state and federal systems.
19	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Voice of the Experienced, the Louisiana Parole
20	Project, the Promise of Justice Initiative, Louisiana Survivors for Reform, and the Parole and
21	Re-entry Clinic at Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center shall report their
22	findings to the Legislature of Louisiana no later than February 1, 2022.
23	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
24	executive director of the Voice of the Experienced, the president of the Louisiana Parole
25	Project, the executive director of the Promise of Justice Initiative, the organizer of Louisiana
26	Survivors for Reform, and the supervising faculty member of the Parole and Re-entry Clinic
27	at Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center.
28	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that one print copy and one electronic copy of any
29	report produced pursuant to this Resolution shall be submitted to the David R. Poynter
30	Legislative Research Library as required by R.S. 24:772.

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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)]

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Jones

Requests the Voice of the Experienced, the La. Parole Project, the Promise of Justice Initiative, La. Survivors for Reform, and the Parole and Re-entry Clinic at La. State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center study the history of parole in La., applicable case law, and any relevant practices, and to submit a report to the La. Legislature.

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by <u>House Committee on Administration of Criminal Justice</u> to the <u>original</u> bill:

1. Add the La. District Attorneys Association as an additional stakeholder who may provide information to the groups conducting the study.