

2021 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 130

BY SENATOR JACKSON

LEGIS POWERS/FUNCTIONS. Creates a task force to study the implementation of a partnership between law enforcement agencies and safety net hospitals.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To create a task force to study the implementation of a partnership between law enforcement
3 agencies and safety net hospitals in order to reduce or eliminate incidents of law
4 enforcement officers handling nonviolent calls or behavioral or social crises where
5 no crime has been committed.

6 WHEREAS, law enforcement officers spend a considerable amount of their time
7 responding to low-priority 911 calls related to quality-of-life issues or social service needs;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, many of these calls could be safely resolved by trained civilians
10 experienced in finding long-term solutions to the root causes of community concerns; and

11 WHEREAS, law enforcement officers who respond to mental health crises may not
12 be trained to communicate with the person in crisis or nearby community and family
13 members; and

14 WHEREAS, the Center for American Progress (CAP) and the Law Enforcement
15 Action Partnership (LEAP) have proposed that cities establish a new branch of civilian first
16 responders, known as "community responders", who would be dispatched in response to
17 calls for service that often do not require a police response; and

18 WHEREAS, dispatching civilians in lieu of law enforcement officers can reduce

1 unnecessary police involvement and help prevent unjust arrests and uses of force, which
2 disproportionately affect people with behavioral health disorders and disabilities; and

3 WHEREAS, dispatching civilians in lieu of law enforcement officers would also free
4 up law enforcement resources, allowing officers to spend more of their time on key tasks,
5 including addressing serious crime and building proactive relationships with communities;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, in an analysis of 911 data from five American cities, CAP and LEAP
8 found that between twenty-three and forty-five percent of calls for service were for less
9 urgent or noncriminal issues such as noise complaints, disorderly conduct, wellness checks,
10 or behavioral health concerns; and

11 WHEREAS, according to a recent CAP and LEAP report, across eight American
12 cities, community responders could have responded to between twenty-one and thirty-eight
13 percent of 911 calls, and an additional thirteen to thirty-three percent of calls could be
14 resolved administratively without dispatching an officer; and

15 WHEREAS, a number of cities have already implemented "civilian first" response
16 programs that incorporate elements of the community responder model; and

17 WHEREAS, community responders would be dispatched in response to two specific
18 categories of calls, behavioral health and social service calls, and quality of life and conflict
19 calls; and

20 WHEREAS, community responders trained as paramedics, clinicians, or crisis
21 intervention specialists could respond to lower-risk 911 calls related to mental health,
22 addiction, and homelessness, and also include peer navigators whose personal experiences
23 with behavioral health and social service needs can help build bridges with individuals
24 involved in these 911 calls; and

25 WHEREAS, community responders would be dispatched to 911 calls for nuisance
26 complaints and nonviolent conflicts, which may include reports of suspicious people, youth
27 behavioral issues, trespassing, and even simple assaults that do not involve weapons; and

28 WHEREAS, community responders who respond to these calls should be
29 professionals with deep connections to the community and extensive training in conflict
30 mediation, as can be found in safety net hospitals; and

1 WHEREAS, the purpose of the partnership between law enforcement agencies and
2 safety net hospitals would be to reduce incidents of injuries related to mental health
3 emergencies while reducing the incarceration of the mentally ill; and

4 WHEREAS, it is appropriate to study the feasibility and implementation of this type
5 of partnership in Louisiana.

6 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana
7 does hereby create a task force to study the implementation of a partnership between law
8 enforcement agencies and safety net hospitals to reduce or eliminate incidents of law
9 enforcement officers handling nonviolent calls or behavioral or social crises in which no
10 crime is reported or has been committed.

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall be composed of the
12 following members:

13 (1) A representative of the Louisiana Department of Health, office of behavioral
14 health, to be designated by the secretary of the department.

15 (2) A representative of the governor's office of disability affairs, to be designated by
16 the governor.

17 (3) A representative of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) - Louisiana
18 Chapter and a patient advocate for mental health, to be designated by the president of the
19 chapter.

20 (4) A representative of the Louisiana Psychological Association, to be designated by
21 the president of the association.

22 (5) A representative of the Capital Area Human Services and a patient advocate for
23 mental health, to be designated by the chair of the board of directors.

24 (6) A representative of the Louisiana Association of Chiefs of Police, to be
25 designated by the president of the association.

26 (7) A representative of the Louisiana Sheriffs' Association, to be designated by the
27 president of the association.

28 (8) A representative of Louisiana State University Shreveport, to be designated by
29 the chancellor of the university.

30 (9) A representative of Ochsner LSU Health Shreveport - Monroe Medical Center,

1 to be designated by the chief executive officer of the medical center.

2 (10) A representative of Louisiana Children's Medical Center, to be designated by
3 the chief executive officer of the medical center.

4 (11) A representative of Louisiana's Mental Health Advocacy Service and a patient
5 advocate for mental health, to be designated by the chief of the board of trustees of the
6 agency.

7 (12) A representative of the Tulane University School of Social Work, to be
8 designated by the dean of the school of social work.

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall submit a written report of
10 findings and recommendations to the Senate no later than February 15, 2022.

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
12 secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health, the governor's office of disability affairs,
13 the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) - Louisiana Chapter, Louisiana
14 Psychological Association, the Capital Area Human Services District, the Louisiana
15 Association of Chiefs of Police, the Louisiana Sheriffs' Association, the chancellor of
16 Louisiana State University Shreveport, the chief executive officer of Ochsner LSU Health
17 Shreveport - Monroe Medical Center, the chief executive officer of Louisiana Children's
18 Medical Center, the dean of the Tulane University School of Social Work, and chair of the
19 board of trustees of Louisiana's Mental Health Advocacy Service.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Alden A. Clement Jr.

SR 130 Original	DIGEST 2021 Regular Session	Jackson
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Creates a task force to study the implementation of a partnership between law enforcement agencies and safety net hospitals in order to reduce or eliminate incidents of law enforcement officers handling nonviolent calls or behavioral or social crises, and requires that the task force submit a report to the Senate no later than February 15, 2022.