

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 59

BY SENATOR BERNARD

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the office of public health of the Louisiana Department of Health to study and submit a report relative to health care infrastructure needs in Louisiana.

WHEREAS, the health care industry has been presented with numerous challenges over the past year and a half but has continued to meet the daily medical needs of patients, as well as serving on the front lines protecting the lives and wellbeing of individuals in emergencies, such as outbreaks of communicable disease, natural disasters, and manmade emergencies; and

WHEREAS, to deliver the safe, timely, and effective care that Louisiana residents depend upon, the health care industry continually maintains thousands of facilities comprising physical infrastructure that relies on extensive, complex, and costly mechanical and physical environment systems, information technology, medical equipment, and other supplies such as personal protective equipment; and

WHEREAS, health care infrastructure faces a number of challenges some of which have been exacerbated by the obstacles presented when caring for patients during the COVID-19 pandemic required facilities to rapidly rethink and often "reinvent" their physical infrastructure to mitigate the spread of the virus, increase critical care capacity, and adjust to complex medication handling requirements to support treatments and vaccines, among other needs; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 emergency, along with the unprecedented hurricane season, and atypical cold weather, has also highlighted the importance of a strong digital health infrastructure which includes access to adequate, affordable broadband connectivity that is essential to enabling telehealth and increasing access to care for all Louisianians; and

WHEREAS, now, more than ever, investment is needed to ensure health care facilities can meet the health care needs of residents and continue to be a source of jobs and economic stability in their communities; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana is expected to receive significant federal funding earmarked for infrastructure in the coming months and years and the state should embark on bringing together stakeholders to research and report to the legislature on critical infrastructure needs of the health care industry in advance of making appropriations.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the office of public health of the Louisiana Department of Health to study health care infrastructure needs in Louisiana including but not limited to investing in physical infrastructure, building capacity for emergency preparedness and response capacity, expanding health care digital and data infrastructure, strengthening the health care workforce, and identifying opportunities to mitigate the risks of having critical infrastructure failures.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the office shall engage health care industry stakeholders to assess critical infrastructure needs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the office shall submit a written report of its findings and recommendations to the Senate Committee on Finance, the House Committee on Appropriations, and the Senate and House committees on health and welfare not later than December 1, 2021.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted to the Louisiana Department of Health, office of public health.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES