

2022 Regular Session

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 39

BY SENATORS ALLAIN, BARROW, BOUDREAUX, CARTER, HENSGENS,  
LUNEAU, MCMATH, FRED MILLS AND POPE

HEALTH DEPARTMENT. Requests the Louisiana Department of Health to study and develop a proposal for a statewide patient movement plan.

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

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To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to study and develop a proposal for a statewide patient movement plan that identifies load-balancing practices for use during declared disasters, and to submit a report to the House and Senate committees on health and welfare and the House and Senate select committees on homeland security.

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Department of Health is the lead agency for our state's public health and medical services emergency support function during disaster and emergency periods, commonly known and classified by the state emergency operations plan 17 as ESF-8; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate for the Louisiana Department of Health to lead the development of a statewide patient movement plan that identifies load-balancing practices that can be utilized in the immediate response to a declared disaster; and

WHEREAS, hospitals are an indispensable part of our state's emergency response infrastructure and it is in the best interest of the state to ensure that all hospital resources and capacity in the state are effectively optimized during the response to a declared emergency to address surges in demand for hospital care, whether from a pandemic or a natural disaster; and

1           WHEREAS, hospital load-balancing practices may involve prehospital distribution  
2 of patients among area healthcare facilities, transferring patients from overwhelmed  
3 healthcare facilities to ones with more capacity, including but not limited to space, staffing,  
4 and equipment, or moving resources to support an overwhelmed facility; and

5           WHEREAS, through the use of hospital load-balancing practices across healthcare  
6 facilities and systems, the state can help ensure that the highest possible level of care is  
7 provided to each patient during a response to a declared disaster.

8           THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby  
9 urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to study and develop a proposal for a  
10 statewide patient movement plan that identifies load-balancing practices for use during  
11 declared disasters, and to submit a report to the House and Senate committees on health and  
12 welfare and the House and Senate select committees on homeland security.

13           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, in conducting the study and developing the  
14 statewide patient movement plan, the Louisiana Department of Health shall work in  
15 conjunction with all relevant stakeholders, including but not limited to the following:

- 16           (1) The Louisiana Emergency Response Network.
- 17           (2) The bureau of emergency medical services.
- 18           (3) The Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness.
- 19           (4) The Rural Hospital Coalition.
- 20           (5) The Louisiana Hospital Association.
- 21           (6) Providers of dialysis services.
- 22           (7) The Louisiana State Medical Society.
- 23           (8) The Louisiana Ambulance Alliance.

24           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the statewide patient movement plan shall  
25 provide for the following key functions:

26           (1) Convening hospitals for the sharing of situational information, including current  
27 contingency measures and potential need for load-balancing, and for the negotiation of  
28 load-balancing.

29           (2) Establishment of a one-call referral line to achieve rapid placement of patients  
30 needing critical care, particularly when the referring hospital does not provide the required

1 services, including but not limited to emergency dialysis, multi-organ failure support, and  
2 management of acute respiratory distress syndrome.

3 (3) Directing secondary referrals to the most appropriate hospital with consideration  
4 given to the proximity of the patient to the hospital and facilities with capacity or the most  
5 appropriate facility for the patient's care given the patient's condition.

6 (4) Establishment of and continued support for a clinical consultant charged with  
7 assisting in the development of policy and to oversee medical aspects of the operation by  
8 using patients' medical information to help prioritize and determine which destinations are  
9 most appropriate.

10 (5) Establishment and maintenance of the ability to provide consultation with  
11 specialty medical providers when required to help prioritize a patient for transfer or receive  
12 instructions for care-in-place when this is required for a period of time.

13 (6) Provisions for appropriate management of load-balancing between overwhelmed  
14 facilities and those with more overall capacity.

15 (7) Addressing how transportation, whether by emergency medical services or  
16 otherwise, will be integrated into the transfer decision-making process, particularly in  
17 situations where specialized transportation may be needed or there may be competition for  
18 critical care ground or air assets that requires prioritization between patients. This integration  
19 includes ensuring that transportation providers receive appropriate reimbursement for the  
20 ambulance and staff time spent on transfers through all available funding sources including  
21 state emergency funding, activation of ambulance strike teams, or use of ambulances through  
22 the federal ambulance contract, and requiring payors to provide reimbursement for these  
23 services when conditions indicate a benefit to the patient from transfer due to surge  
24 conditions at the facility of origin.

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Department of Health shall submit  
26 the proposal for a statewide patient movement plan to the House and Senate committees on  
27 health and welfare, the House and Senate select committees on homeland security and the  
28 David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library no later than sixty days prior to the 2023  
29 Regular Legislative Session.

30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the

1 secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health.

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The original instrument was prepared by Brandi Cannon. The following digest, which does not constitute a part of the legislative instrument, was prepared by Thomas L. Tyler.

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SCR 39 Engrossed DIGEST Allain  
2022 Regular Session

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Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

Senate Floor Amendments to original bill

1. Adds three members to the list of stakeholders to work in conjunction with the La. Dept. of Health:
  - (a) Providers of dialysis services
  - (b) The Louisiana State Medical Society
  - (c) The Louisiana Ambulance Alliance