HLS 22RS-391 ENGROSSED

2022 Regular Session

1

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 62

BY REPRESENTATIVE ECHOLS

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS: Requests the La. Department of Health to develop a proposal for a statewide hospital coordination plan for use in disasters and other emergency situations

A RESOLUTION

2	To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to develop a proposal for a
3	statewide hospital coordination plan and patient transfer strategy for use in disasters
4	and other emergency situations and to report the proposal to the House Committee
5	on Health and Welfare and the House Select Committee on Homeland Security.
6	WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the date on which global health authorities
7	recognized the worldwide outbreak of COVID-19 as a pandemic, the governor of this state,
8	through Proclamation No. 25 JBE 2020, declared a state of public health emergency in
9	accordance with the Louisiana Health Emergency Powers Act, R.S. 29:760 et seq.; and
10	WHEREAS, this state of public health emergency in response to COVID-19 was
11	routinely renewed and would run continuously for over two years, finally expiring on March
12	16, 2022; and
13	WHEREAS, throughout these two years, gubernatorial proclamations declaring and
14	renewing Louisiana's COVID-19 public health emergency set forth a wide variety of
15	protocols and mandates for the public and private sectors alike which were designed to
16	respond to and mitigate the impact of COVID-19 in this state; however, no such
17	proclamation encompassed a statewide hospital coordination plan or patient transfer
18	strategy; and
19	WHEREAS, other states have recognized the critical necessity of having a statewide
20	hospital coordination plan in place; and

1 WHEREAS, a notable example of such a plan is Colorado's, which that state 2 implemented pursuant to Executive Order No. D 2021 135; and 3 WHEREAS, administrators of rural hospitals in certain regions of Louisiana have 4 reported that during the state's first surge of COVID infections in 2020, they were instructed 5 by health officials to prepare to accept large numbers of COVID patients from other regions; 6 that they emptied their beds in order to do so; and that no COVID patients were ever 7 transferred to them; and 8 WHEREAS, many of these same rural hospitals have reported that similar events 9 transpired during the state's preparation for and response to the hurricanes that impacted our 10 state in 2020 and 2021, as the hospitals were again instructed by health officials to make bed 11 capacity available for transferred patients, did so, and received no transferred patients; and 12 WHEREAS, hospitals are an indispensable part of our state's emergency response 13 infrastructure; and 14 WHEREAS, because the Louisiana Department of Health is the lead agency for our 15 state's public health and medical services emergency support function during disaster and 16 emergency periods (known commonly and classified by the state emergency operations plan 17 as ESF-8), it is appropriate to call upon this agency to lead the development of a statewide 18 hospital coordination plan and patient transfer strategy. 19 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the 20 Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health 21 to develop a proposal for a statewide hospital coordination plan and patient transfer strategy 22 for use in disasters and other emergency situations. 23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in developing the proposal called for in this 24 Resolution, the Louisiana Department of Health shall engage, collaborate with, and obtain 25 information and guidance from the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency 26 Preparedness and the Louisiana Emergency Response Network. 27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Department of Health shall submit 28 the proposal called for in this Resolution to the House Committee on Health and Welfare, 29 the House Select Committee on Homeland Security, and the David R. Poynter Legislative 30 Research Library on or before December 1, 2022.

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

- 2 secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health, the director of the Governor's Office of
- 3 Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, and the executive director of the
- 4 Louisiana Emergency Response Network.

## **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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**Echols** 

Urges and requests the La. Department of Health (LDH) to develop a proposal for a statewide hospital coordination plan and patient transfer strategy for use in disasters and other emergency situations. Requires LDH to submit the proposal to the House Committee on Health and Welfare and the House Select Committee on Homeland Security on or before Dec. 1, 2022.