

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 87

BY SENATOR MIZELL

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to enact policies to assist adolescents after giving birth in hospitals.

WHEREAS, the United States has a higher teenage pregnancy and teenage birth rate than other developed nations; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that Louisiana women between the ages of fifteen and nineteen are having children at a rate of thirty or more per one thousand; and

WHEREAS, teen pregnancy may be by choice, or the result of sexual abuse, or being a victim of sexual trafficking; and

WHEREAS, the CDC reports that teen births contribute to greater high school drop-out rates, and social determinants of health in communities and families may contribute to high teen birth rates, including low education, low income levels, and an inability to access reproductive services; and

WHEREAS, the Maternal and Child Health Journal reported in 2009 that children born to teenage mothers are at a greater risk for low birth rates, cognitive delays, lower IQ scores, and a higher body mass index; and

WHEREAS, the American Academy of Pediatrics reports that teenage mothers, on average, are impoverished, experience lower levels of education, and have lower rates of labor force participation; and

WHEREAS, children of teenage mothers are more likely to experience maltreatment and foster care prior to their first birthday, and are more likely to engage in risky behaviors when they are older; and

WHEREAS, adolescents reporting to hospitals to give birth should be contacted by the Louisiana Department of Health to assess what services the new mother and child may require to prevent maltreatment, lower levels of education, and lower labor force participation by the new mother, and decrease the potential for developmental delays of the child.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to enact policies to assist adolescents after giving birth in hospitals.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE