

2022 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 89

BY REPRESENTATIVE DUSTIN MILLER

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Insurance to conduct a study concerning health insurance coverage for therapies and treatments for pediatric acute-onset neuropsychiatric syndrome (PANS); pediatric autoimmune neuropsychiatric disorders associated with streptococcal (strep) infections (PANDAS); and PANS and PANDAS considered as types of autoimmune encephalitis (AE).

WHEREAS, according to the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences of the National Institutes of Health, PANS is the clinical diagnosis of "a condition defined by sudden onset of obsessive-compulsive symptoms and/or severe eating restrictions, along with at least two other cognitive, behavioral, or neurological symptoms"; and

WHEREAS, in many cases of PANS, "there is evidence of an abnormal autoimmune or inflammatory response in the brain following any of various infections in the body. When the associated infection is known to be strep, the condition is called PANDAS," a subtype of PANS; and

WHEREAS, PANS and PANDAS are also considered to be types of autoimmune encephalitis (AE), an umbrella term for any type of post infectious encephalitis where the immune system attacks the brain; and

WHEREAS, symptoms cause disruption to a child's neurological functioning and may appear in episodes of anxiety, incontinence, seizures, confusion, depression, tics, personality changes, declines in school performance, and changes in sensory sensitivities, and may worsen or extend with each episode; and

WHEREAS, younger children are often misdiagnosed as having autism, and many affected children meet criteria for state disability services because their symptoms are not solely attributable to mental illness; and

WHEREAS, studies have found several therapies and treatments to be effective in resolving symptoms, including but not limited to antibiotic therapy, intravenous immunoglobulin treatments, antidepressant medications, cognitive behavioral therapies, and certain oncology medications and plasma exchange in the most severe cases; and

WHEREAS, early treatment is important to prevent permanent brain injury and nervous system damage, cognitive decline, mental illness that may persist into adulthood, and death because the conditions are potentially fatal; and

WHEREAS, although therapies and treatments can help to improve the lives of affected children whose overall wellbeing and futures are impacted by disruptions in neurological functioning, health insurance coverage for such therapies and treatments to relieve the symptoms of PANS, PANDAS, and PANS and PANDAS as types of AE is generally not available.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Louisiana Department of Insurance to conduct a study concerning health insurance coverage for therapies and treatments for PANS, PANDAS, and PANS and PANDAS as types of AE and to submit a report of its findings and recommendations from the study called for in this Resolution to the House Committee on Insurance, the Senate Committee on Insurance, and the David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library no later February 1, 2023.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Louisiana Department of Insurance to consider, at minimum, the extent to which such coverage is currently available in this state, the potential level of demand for such coverage in this state, and the costs and benefits of an expansion of such coverage in this state to meet potential demand.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, in carrying out the purposes of this Resolution, the department may engage and solicit input, recommendations, and advice in the collection of information and data from the office for citizens with developmental disabilities, persons living with PANS, PANDAS, or either condition as a type of AE and their parents, issuers of private health insurance plans, clinical psychologists, osteopathic physicians, neurologists, psychiatrists, pediatricians, and other pertinent healthcare providers.

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

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE