

2022 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 205

BY SENATORS MIZELL, BARROW, CLOUD, HEWITT, JACKSON AND FRED  
MILLS

CHILDREN. Requests the Senate Select Committee on Women and Children to conduct research to ascertain the efficacy of the program available and funds allocated to meet the needs of the children of the state.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the Senate Select Committee on Women and Children to conduct  
3 ongoing research to ascertain the efficacy of the current programs available and  
4 funds allocated in meeting the needs of children of the state and to make  
5 recommendations for changes that will improve outcomes, minimize duplication of  
6 services, and fill any gaps in services necessary to promote child well-being.

7 WHEREAS, there are over one million children in the state of Louisiana who are the  
8 state's greatest asset and whose well-being is critical to the state's future; and

9 WHEREAS, Louisiana ranks 48th overall among states in child well-being, 46th in  
10 child mortality, and 49<sup>th</sup> in infant mortality; and

11 WHEREAS, almost thirty percent of Louisiana's children live in poverty, twenty  
12 percent live in high-poverty areas of the state, and these numbers have risen during the  
13 COVID-19 pandemic; and

14 WHEREAS, growing up in poverty is one of the greatest threats to healthy child  
15 development, which impacts the entire trajectory of a child's life; and

16 WHEREAS, many children in our state do not have a safe home environment  
17 including hundreds of children who are victims of sex trafficking every year; and

18 WHEREAS, the children of Louisiana are in need of a variety of services including

1 physical and mental health care services, meal assistance, tutorial programs, educational  
2 services, mentorship, scholarships, social development programs, community development,  
3 and housing assistance; and

4 WHEREAS, billions of dollars in state and federal funds are expended annually on  
5 programs for children in this state; and

6 WHEREAS, numerous state departments of Louisiana provide a variety of services  
7 to the states' children using several of funding sources; and

8 WHEREAS, the legislature also appropriates monies to a myriad of nongovernmental  
9 programs as a mechanism to provide additional services to children; and

10 WHEREAS, there is not currently a system in place to measure the outcomes of the  
11 various programs and services; and

12 WHEREAS, the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana recognizes its fiduciary  
13 responsibility to the citizens of the state, particularly the state's youngest citizens, to make  
14 the best use of our limited financial resources; and

15 WHEREAS, by investing wisely in our children, we can have a significant impact  
16 on the trajectory of our citizens' lives and have lifelong impacts in every dimension of their  
17 life, from physical and mental health to educational attainment and labor market success.

18 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate Select Committee on Women and  
19 Children meet regularly and conduct research on:

- 20 (1) Access to children's basic needs such as clean water, nutritious food, safe  
21 shelter, healthcare, and education.
- 22 (2) Access to resources that promote healthy development and promote the well-  
23 being of all the state's children regardless of socioeconomic status.
- 24 (3) Access to children's services through every region of the state including the  
25 variations of access between the urban and rural areas of the state.
- 26 (4) The value of the development of a regional approach to the provision of  
27 services that promote child well-being.
- 28 (5) Current policies and programs intended to reduce child poverty and improve  
29 child well-being outcomes.
- 30 (6) Best practices in other states and countries.

