

2023 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 110

BY SENATOR BOUDREAUX

HEALTH DEPARTMENT. Requests the Louisiana Department of Health to implement a digital platform to facilitate access to behavioral health services.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to implement a digital platform to  
3 facilitate access to behavioral health services for adults with serious mental illness  
4 and children with serious emotional disturbance.

5 WHEREAS, serious mental illness (SMI) commonly refers to a diagnosis of  
6 psychotic disorders, bipolar disorder, and either major depression with psychotic symptoms  
7 or treatment-resistant depression; and

8 WHEREAS, SMI can also include anxiety disorders, eating disorders, and  
9 personality disorders, if the degree of functional impairment is severe; and

10 WHEREAS, SMIs are long-term illnesses involving substantial functional  
11 impairment that often lead to an inability to maintain gainful employment, poor social  
12 support, repeated psychiatric hospitalizations, homelessness, incarceration, and coexisting  
13 substance use disorders; and

14 WHEREAS, in 2019, over fifteen out of one hundred thousand Louisiana residents  
15 died by suicide; and

16 WHEREAS, in 2020, over forty-one out of one hundred thousand Louisiana residents  
17 died from drug overdoses; and

18 WHEREAS, in 2021, almost eighteen percent of adults in Louisiana reported their

1 mental health was not good fourteen or more days in the past thirty days; and

2 WHEREAS, in 2021, almost twenty-percent of adults, ages eighteen through  
3 forty-four, in Louisiana reported frequent mental-health distress; and

4 WHEREAS, since the COVID pandemic began, over thirty-two percent of adults in  
5 Louisiana reported having symptoms of serious depression or anxiety; and

6 WHEREAS, children with severe emotional disturbance (SED) are persons, under  
7 the age of 18, who have had a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder of  
8 sufficient duration to meet diagnostic criteria specified within the most current Diagnostic  
9 and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), that resulted in functional impairment  
10 which substantially interferes with or limits the child's role or functioning in family, school,  
11 or community activities; and

12 WHEREAS, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration  
13 (SAMHSA) has identified a digital platform to facilitate access to behavioral health services  
14 for adults with serious mental illness and children with serious emotional disturbance as an  
15 approved expenditure through SAMHSA block grants to support efforts to connect  
16 individuals with services in their area; and

17 WHEREAS, a digital platform could provide access to services in a wide variety of  
18 settings, including mental-health services, suicide prevention, and veterans' affairs that  
19 would greatly benefit the residents of Louisiana; and

20 WHEREAS, a Louisiana-specific digital platform which makes it easier for  
21 individuals to find local behavioral health services would be a valuable resource to Louisiana  
22 residents; and

23 WHEREAS, Louisiana continues to face unprecedented challenges with substance  
24 abuse, violent crime, and suicide, making the need to connect residents with resources even  
25 more vital than ever.

26 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana  
27 does hereby urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to implement a digital  
28 platform to facilitate access to behavioral health services for adults with serious mental  
29 illness and children with serious emotional disturbance.

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

