

2023 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 73

BY REPRESENTATIVE KNOX

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Department of Transportation and Development to work with other agencies and interest groups to take appropriate action to remove and prevent homeless people from residing within interstate rights of way in the New Orleans metropolitan area.

WHEREAS, there are currently multiple homeless encampments under the Interstate 10 overpasses in the New Orleans area; and

WHEREAS, there is a widespread shortage of affordable housing options; and

WHEREAS, the associated crime, including loitering, trespassing, and panhandling in the vicinity of the encampments is a matter of public concern; and

WHEREAS, public resources are expended cleaning up the increased trash accumulating in the areas of the encampments; and

WHEREAS, living conditions in the encampments present health concerns such as the spread of Covid and hepatitis, as well as the spread of fleas and lice; and

WHEREAS, unaddressed chronic mental health issues contribute to the number of people in the encampment; and

WHEREAS, other health concerns for those in the encampment are created by crowded living conditions, lack of proper hygiene, and lack of access to proper waste disposal options; and

WHEREAS, the risk of death associated with the encampment is elevated; and

WHEREAS, the encampments create fire hazards due to unsafe fires used for cooking and heating; and

WHEREAS, there are chronic public intoxication issues associated with the encampments; and

WHEREAS, the unseemly area of the encampments have a negative impact on tourism and on businesses in the area; and

WHEREAS, these encampments occupy public parking spaces and interfere with commerce in the area; and

WHEREAS, these encampments present a myriad of other real concerns to public safety.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Department of Transportation and Development work with other agencies and interest groups to discuss potential solutions and address the public safety concerns regarding homeless people in the New Orleans metropolitan area residing within interstate rights of way.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Transportation shall consult with, and receive advice from, the following entities:

- (1) The New Orleans Police Department.
- (2) The New Orleans Health Department.
- (3) Louisiana Balance of State Continuum of Care.
- (4) The Department of Environmental Quality.
- (5) The Louisiana State Police.
- (6) The Housing and Urban Development's Continuum of Care.
- (7) The Department of Veterans Affairs' Homeless Program.
- (8) The New Orleans Office of Homeless Services and Strategy.
- (9) The Housing Authority of New Orleans.
- (10) UNITY of Greater New Orleans.
- (11) The Covenant House New Orleans.
- (12) Travelers Aid Society of Greater New Orleans.
- (13) New Orleans & Company.
- (14) The New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center.
- (15) The Historic Faubourg Tremé Association.
- (16) The Port of New Orleans.

(17) Odyssey House of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Transportation and Development shall provide a written report of its progress to the president of the Louisiana Senate and the speaker of the Louisiana House of Representatives no later than March 1, 2024.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Department of Transportation and Development.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE