HLS 24RS-311 ORIGINAL

2024 Regular Session

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HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 11

BY REPRESENTATIVE MOORE

COURTS: Requests a study to make recommendations regarding behavioral health courts

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2	To urge and request the office of behavioral health of the Louisiana Department of Health
3	to study the connection between mental health issues, homelessness, and the criminal
4	justice system and the effectiveness of behavioral health courts as an alternative to
5	the traditional judicial system.
6	WHEREAS, studies have shown that people who suffer from mental illnesses are
7	more likely to enter into the criminal justice system when they do not have access to quality
8	behavioral health services in their communities; and
9	WHEREAS, national studies indicate that the rates of mental illness are consistently
10	higher in the criminal justice system; and
11	WHEREAS, approximately half of the United States jail population and over one-
12	third of the United States prison population were diagnosed with a mental illness in 2020;
13	and
14	WHEREAS, between 2018 and 2019, five hundred twenty-one thousand people in
15	Louisiana received mental health services the previous year; and
16	WHEREAS, over one-third of Louisiana's total incarcerated adult individuals were
17	identified as receiving some level of mental health care in 2019; and
18	WHEREAS, the Louisiana Legislature enacted the "Mental Health Court Treatment
19	Act" in 2013 which established mental health court treatment programs; and
20	WHEREAS, the program allows people with mental illnesses to serve their sentence
21	on probation if they comply with certain requirements; and

1	WHEREAS, only three behavioral health courts have been launched, in the parishes
2	of Calcasieu, Rapides, and St. Tammany; and
3	WHEREAS, homeless individuals may also be more likely to have mental health
4	conditions which may increase their risk of involvement in the criminal justice system; and
5	WHEREAS, people with severe mental illness may be less able to cope with the
6	stresses of homelessness or may perpetrate criminal acts that are manifestations of their
7	illness; and
8	WHEREAS, in 2008, the rate of homelessness among jail inmates who had been
9	homeless in the previous year and homeless at the time of incarceration was approximately
10	7.5 to 11.3 times the annual rate of homelessness in the general population; and
11	WHEREAS, it is important to understand the needs of Louisiana residents who are
12	incarcerated and suffer from mental illness in order to understand the impact of untreated
13	mental illnesses and the criminal justice system and to reduce recidivism.
14	THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
15	urge and request the office of behavioral health of the Louisiana Department of Health to
16	study the connection between mental health issues, homelessness, and the criminal justice
17	system.
18	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the office of behavioral health of the Louisiana
19	Department of Health shall study the effectiveness, impact, and operational costs of the
20	behavioral health courts in Calcasieu Parish, Rapides Parish, and St. Tammany Parish and
21	report its findings and recommendations to the legislature prior to the convening of the 2025
22	Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana.
23	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
24	office of behavioral health of the Louisiana Department of Health.
25	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the office of behavioral health of the Louisiana
26	Department of Health shall submit one print copy and one electronic copy of any report
27	produced pursuant to this Resolution to the David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library
28	as required by R.S. 24:772.

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ORIGINAL
HCR NO. 11

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HCR 11 Original

2024 Regular Session

Moore

Requests the office of behavioral health of the La. Dept. of Health to study and make recommendations regarding behavioral health courts.