

1 WHEREAS, services for the program are active in the Greater New Orleans region,
2 the Greater Baton Rouge region, the South-Central Louisiana region, the Northwest
3 Louisiana region, and Jefferson Parish; and

4 WHEREAS, although the efforts of the Louisiana Crisis Response System do not go
5 unnoticed, the residents in this state are still facing challenges with mental health; and

6 WHEREAS, further expansion of the pool of behavioral healthcare providers eligible
7 for enhanced Medicaid dollars may aid the state in addressing this matter; and

8 WHEREAS, the inclusion of healthcare providers with a master of social work and
9 other master's-level behavioral healthcare providers, including but not limited to mental
10 health counselors, may also help the statewide epidemic; and

11 WHEREAS, it is the duty of this legislature to consider expanding the pool of
12 behavioral healthcare providers who are eligible for enhanced Medicaid dollars and
13 potentially including other healthcare providers in its expansion.

14 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
15 create a task force to study the potential expansion of behavioral healthcare providers who
16 are eligible for enhanced Medicaid reimbursement.

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall consist of members from the
18 following associations, boards, departments, and organizations:

19 (1) The president of the Louisiana School Psychologist Association or his designee.

20 (2) The president of the Louisiana Association of School Social Workers or his
21 designee.

22 (3) A member of the Legislative Youth Advisory Council in Louisiana who shall be
23 appointed by the chair of the Louisiana Commission on Civic Education.

24 (4) The secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health or his designee.

25 (5) The superintendent of the Louisiana Department of Education or his designee.

26 (6) The administrator of the Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners or his
27 designee.

28 (7) The president of the Louisiana Counseling Association or his designee.

29 (8) The president of the Louisiana Association of Child Welfare and Attendance or
30 his designee.

1 (9) The president of the Louisiana State Nurses Association or his designee.

2 (10) The executive director of the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of
3 Psychologists or his designee.

4 (11) The chair of the Louisiana Behavior Analyst Board or his designee.

5 (12) The president of the Louisiana School Counselors Association or his designee.

6 (13) The president of the Louisiana Center for Health Equity or his designee.

7 (14) The executive director of the Louisiana State Board of Licensed Professional
8 Counselors or his designee.

9 (15) The director of the Louisiana Managed Medicaid Association or his designee.

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that members of the task force shall study and
11 provide information and recommendations on the following:

12 (1) The number of counseling staff in schools, which shall include a determination
13 of how many of those persons are social workers, guidance counselors, nurses, nurse
14 practitioners, physician assistants, and psychologists delineated by full-time and part-time
15 staff equivalency and contractual staff equivalency or time allocation.

16 (2) The feasibility of staffing at least one social worker per school.

17 (3) The feasibility of establishing certain educational programs or incentives to bring
18 more mental health counselors into the workforce, which shall include counselors who have
19 completed a dual degree program for mental health counseling and board-certified
20 behavioral analysis and the like.

21 (4) The potential effects of changing recommended guidelines for schools to specify
22 that the recommended ratio applies exclusively to mental health professionals and not
23 guidance counselors for academics.

24 (5) The potential outcome of creating nurse advice lines to expand access to an
25 initial source of non-emergency care, including for behavioral health, as part of the
26 continuum of supports available for Medicaid beneficiaries.

27 (6) Recommendations for initiatives to bolster guidance, oversight, and enforcement
28 of existing laws to ensure those in the behavioral health workforce are reimbursed equitably
29 when compared to their peers in the healthcare workforce, specifically regarding insurance
30 reimbursement.

1 (7) Recommendations for initiatives to foster alignment among payors, through
2 public-private partnerships, to promote meaningful financial incentives and remove
3 administrative burdens, such as excessive paperwork and complex requirements for joining
4 health insurance networks and getting approvals from insurers as part of necessary care.

5 (8) Recommendations for incentives to encourage persons to enter the behavioral
6 health workforce in underserved areas, which shall include but not be limited to scholarships
7 and loan forgiveness.

8 (9) The pay and structural barriers to entering and remaining in the behavioral health
9 workforce, specifically for populations that are currently underrepresented, such as
10 educational practices that discourage participation by those that are socioeconomically
11 disadvantaged.

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Department of Health shall
13 provide staff support to the task force.

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the chairman and vice chairman of the task force
15 shall be elected by a majority of the task force members at its first meeting, which shall be
16 held no later than July 31, 2024. During the first meeting of the task force, its members may
17 select other officers as they deem appropriate.

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force meetings shall be held monthly
19 and the final report of findings and policy recommendations from the task force shall be
20 submitted in the form of a written report to the House and Senate committees on health and
21 welfare no later than February 28, 2025.

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
23 president of the Louisiana School Psychologist Association, the president of the Louisiana
24 Association of School Social Workers, the chair of the Louisiana Commission on Civic
25 Education, the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health, the Louisiana State
26 Superintendent of Education of the Louisiana Department of Education, the administrator
27 of the Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners, the president of the Louisiana
28 Counseling Association, the president of the Louisiana Association of Child Welfare and
29 Attendance, the president of the Louisiana State Nurses Association, the executive director
30 of the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists, the chair of the Louisiana

1 Behavior Analyst Board, the president of the Louisiana School Counselors Association, the
2 president of the Louisiana Center for Health Equity, the executive director of the Louisiana
3 State Board of Licensed Professional Counselors, and the director of the Louisiana Managed
4 Medicaid Association.

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)]

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2024 Regular Session

Marcelle

Creates a task force to study the potential expansion of behavioral healthcare providers who are eligible for enhanced Medicaid reimbursement.

Requests the task force to submit a report of its findings and policy recommendations by Feb. 28, 2025.