

2024 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 222

BY REPRESENTATIVE EDMONSTON

CHILDREN: Requests the Louisiana Department of Health to evaluate factors affecting children who are diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder in this state and their families

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to evaluate factors affecting  
3 children who are diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in this state and  
4 their families.

5 WHEREAS, according to the National Institute of Mental Health, ASD is a  
6 neurological and developmental disorder that affects how people interact, communicate,  
7 learn, and behave with others; and

8 WHEREAS, there are many determining symptoms for an ASD diagnosis; and

9 WHEREAS, ASD symptoms include but are not limited to difficulties with social  
10 interaction and communication, issues with transitioning from one activity to another,  
11 problems with focusing on certain details, and unusual reactions to sensations; and

12 WHEREAS, children who are diagnosed with ASD often experience various health-  
13 related conditions which include but are not limited to epilepsy, depression, anxiety, and  
14 attention deficit hyperactivity disorder; and

15 WHEREAS, between 2000 and 2020, one in thirty-six children were diagnosed with  
16 ASD; and

17 WHEREAS, statistically, the amount of grade school children diagnosed with ASD  
18 has risen in recent years; and

1           WHEREAS, as a result, family members, caretakers, and educators of children with  
2 ASD have been impacted by the increased needs that caring for a child with ASD presents;  
3 and

4           WHEREAS, according to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2022, only  
5 twenty-one percent of those with disabilities like ASD were employed; and

6           WHEREAS, additionally, males are three to four times more likely to be diagnosed  
7 with ASD than females while the statistics of children diagnosed with ASD remains to be  
8 genetically diverse; and

9           WHEREAS, this data-based diversity indicates that genetics do not account for all  
10 instances of ASD; and

11           WHEREAS, the increased prevalence of ASD in certain socioeconomic  
12 demographics and geographic locations has also generated great interest in the potential  
13 involvement of environmental factors and toxicants in our environment; and

14           WHEREAS, the role of environmental factors and toxicants in the development of  
15 ASD is critical, because environmental factors impact epigenetics significantly and influence  
16 the risk for developing ASD; and

17           WHEREAS, ASD is associated with roughly four million dollars in lifetime costs per  
18 individual; and

19           WHEREAS, the lifetime costs in the United States to date for ASD is more than  
20 seven trillion dollars; and

21           WHEREAS, the projected societal costs for ASD in the United States over the next  
22 decade is estimated to increase significantly if prevalence remains the same; and

23           WHEREAS, this data illustrates the need to evaluate and identify risks, etiology,  
24 environmental factors, and toxicants that affect ASD rates within our state; and

25           WHEREAS, an evaluation of the infrastructure needed to provide equitable  
26 diagnostics, treatments, and support services with a sound economic impact on children with  
27 ASD and their families is pertinent.

28           THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the  
29 Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health  
30 to evaluate factors affecting children who are diagnosed with ASD in this state and their

1 families and submit its findings in the form of a written report to the House Committee on  
2 Health and Welfare by February 1, 2025.

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the evaluation shall include but not be limited  
4 to access to early diagnosis, treatment options, medical and homecare costs, education  
5 challenges, employment challenges, environmental factors, toxicants, epigenetics, and  
6 long-term care options.

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Department of Health shall  
8 evaluate and understand the prevalence of ASD in this state by region and demographic.

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Department of Health shall  
10 evaluate and understand the environmental and toxicant factors that may be affecting  
11 children in regions of the state wherein ASD diagnosis has increased in comparison to other  
12 regions of the state.

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Department of Health shall  
14 evaluate and understand the fiscal impact of ASD on the individuals affected by the disease  
15 and how it impacts the state's healthcare and education systems.

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, in its production of the written report required  
17 by this Resolution, the Louisiana Department of Health shall work with colleges and  
18 universities in this state that have research centers to gain clinical expertise and insight on  
19 autism spectrum disorder.

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the  
21 secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health.

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#### 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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HR 222 Engrossed

2024 Regular Session

Edmonston

Requests the La. Dept. of Health to evaluate factors affecting children who are diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder in this state and their families.

Requests the submission of a report to the House Committee on Health and Welfare by Feb. 1, 2025.

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Health and Welfare to the original bill:

1. Require the La. Dept. of Health, in its preparation of the written report of its findings, to work with colleges and universities in this state that have research centers to gain clinical expertise and insight on autism spectrum disorder.
2. Require the La. Dept. of Health to evaluate and understand the prevalence of autism spectrum disorder in this state by region and demographic.
3. Make technical corrections.