

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 98

BY SENATOR MILLS AND REPRESENTATIVE STUART BISHOP

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To designate April 23, 2014, as "School-Based Health Care Awareness Day" in Louisiana.

WHEREAS, school-based health care facilities are an important statewide resource helping to address the health care needs of underserved and uninsured children, providing needed preventive, diagnostic, and treatment services, including direct primary and mental health care for acute and chronic illnesses, health education, case management assistance, and immunizations; and

WHEREAS, these facilities provide vital counseling for more recently understood health care concerns that have replaced infectious diseases as the major illnesses of childhood, including such risk factors as childhood obesity, smoking, substance abuse, violence, and safety issues, as well as behavioral problems ranging from mild to severe; and

WHEREAS, in 1990, as policymakers became concerned about the high morbidity and mortality rates of adolescents, the Office of Public Health, within the Department of Health and Hospitals, was asked to determine the feasibility of opening school-based health care facilities; and

WHEREAS, in 1991, the Adolescent School Health Initiative was enacted and school-based health care facilities came into existence around the state; and

WHEREAS, a school-based health care facility provides convenient access to comprehensive, primary, and preventive physical and mental health services for public school students available at the school site; and

WHEREAS, as students spend a significant portion of their day on school grounds, school-based health care facilities are accessible, convenient, encourage family and community involvement, reduce student absenteeism, reduce parental leave from work for doctor visits, and work with school personnel to meet the needs of the students and their families; and

WHEREAS, school-based health care facilities complement school nurses and social workers, where they exist, because generally the scope of practice of school nurses and social workers is more limited than that of the school-based health care facility, which has a broad mandate; and

WHEREAS, the school-based health care facilities are able to provide comprehensive health services to students, providing treatment for minor illness and injury, comprehensive physicals as may be required for school-related activities, behavioral health counseling, treatments for chronic diseases, required vaccines, and other beneficial services to enhance the learning environment of a school; and

WHEREAS, at this time sixty-three school-based health care facilities are operated in twenty-seven parishes throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, during the 2012-2013 school year over seventy-one thousand students made nearly one hundred twelve thousand visits to school-based health care facilities; and

WHEREAS, in this 2013-2014 school year over fifty-seven thousand students have made nearly eighty-five thousand visits to school-based health care facilities, with several weeks remaining in the school year.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby designate April 23, 2014, as "School-Based Health Care Awareness Day" in Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Louisiana School-Based Health Alliance, current Board President Theresa Williams.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES