

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 44

BY SENATORS DORSEY-COLOMB, CLAITOR, ERDEY AND NEVERS

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To direct the Department of Health and Hospitals to declare youth violence a public health epidemic and the Department of Education to establish a statewide trauma-informed education program.

WHEREAS, youth across Louisiana are committing acts of violence against one another and throughout their communities; and

WHEREAS, a national survey by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that adults in the United States reported approximately one million five hundred sixty thousand incidents of victimization by perpetrators estimated to be between twelve and twenty years of age; and

WHEREAS, the CDC reports that many people survive violence and are left with permanent physical and emotional scars, and that violence erodes communities by reducing productivity, decreasing property values, and disrupting social services; and

WHEREAS, a national initiative lead by the CDC, *Striving to Reduce Youth Violence Everywhere* (STRYVE), assists communities in applying a public health perspective to preventing youth violence; and

WHEREAS, in 1985, then United States Surgeon General C. Everett Koop declared violence to be a public health issue and called for the application of the science of public health to address treatment and prevention of violence; and

WHEREAS, in 2000, then United States Surgeon General David Satcher declared youth violence a public health epidemic; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Satcher released a report declaring youth violence a threat to public health and calling for federal, state, local, and private entities to invest in research on youth violence and for the use of the knowledge gained to inform intervention programs; and

WHEREAS, the report states that the public health approach to youth violence involves identifying risk and protective factors, determining how they work, making the public aware of these findings, and designing programs to prevent or stop the violence; and

WHEREAS, the 2000 public health report calls for national resolve to confront the problem of youth violence systematically; to facilitate entry of youth into effective intervention programs rather than incarceration; to improve public awareness of effective interventions; to convene youth, families, researchers, and public and private organizations for periodic youth violence summits; to develop new collaborative multidisciplinary partnerships; and to hold periodic, highly visible national summits; and

WHEREAS, an individual's characteristics, experiences and environmental conditions during childhood and adolescence are indicators of future violent behavior; and

WHEREAS, ages fifteen through eighteen, the ages that students spend in high school, are the peak years of youth violence; and

WHEREAS, there is great concern over high school dropout rates, poor academic performance, and violence in schools across this state; and

WHEREAS, the Yale University School of Medicine, Child Study Center, Comer School Development Program (SDP) is an operating system comprised of three teams: the school planning and management team, the student and staff support team, and the parent team, which work together to create a comprehensive school plan, to design and conduct staff development aligned with the goals of the comprehensive school plan, and to assess and modify the plan as necessary using a wide range of student and school-level data to ensure that the school is continuously improving.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby direct the Department of Health and Hospitals to declare youth violence a public health epidemic and the Department of Education to establish a statewide trauma-informed education program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals and the superintendent of the Department of Education.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES