HLS 15RS-1428 ORIGINAL

2015 Regular Session

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HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 132

BY REPRESENTATIVE HENRY

CHILDREN/ABUSE: Requests a study on prospective implementation of a system to help health practitioners identify child abuse

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2	To urge and request the Department of Children and Family Services and the Department
3	of Health and Hospitals, jointly, to study prospective implementation of an
4	information system to enhance the ability of health practitioners to identify child
5	abuse, and to report findings of the study and recommendations to the legislative
6	committees on health and welfare.
7	WHEREAS, two agencies of this state that are charged with critical public functions
8	related to the health and well-being of children are the Department of Children and Family
9	Services, referred to hereafter as "DCFS", and the Department of Health and Hospitals,
10	referred to hereafter as "DHH"; and
11	WHEREAS, one of several areas in which the duties of the two departments intersect
12	is in the realm of child welfare; and
13	WHEREAS, DCFS carries out the state's major tasks related to child welfare through
14	its child welfare division, which works to protect children against abuse and neglect and to
15	find permanent homes for foster children; and
16	WHEREAS, though less direct, the involvement of DHH in the child welfare system
17	is still significant; and
18	WHEREAS, among the types of professionals who are classified by the provisions
19	of Title VI of the Louisiana Children's Code as "mandatory reporters", and thus are required
20	by law to report suspected child abuse and neglect, are health practitioners; and

1	WHEREAS, "health practitioner" is defined in Children's Code Article 603 as any
2	individual who provides health care services, including a physician, surgeon, physical
3	therapist, dentist, resident, intern, hospital staff member, podiatrist, chiropractor, licensed
4	nurse, nursing aide, dental hygienist, any emergency medical technician, a paramedic,
5	optometrist, medical examiner, or coroner, who diagnoses, examines, or treats a child or his
6	family; and
7	WHEREAS, these health practitioners are licensed by regulatory boards and
8	commissions created within DHH, and the great majority practice their professions in
9	healthcare facilities that are licensed by the health standards section of DHH; and
10	WHEREAS, beyond the exercise of their duties as mandatory reporters, health
11	practitioners play other key roles in the child welfare system as they treat victims of child
12	abuse, provide expert testimony in abuse and neglect cases before courts of law, and advise
13	others concerning the health dimensions of abuse; and
14	WHEREAS, because health practitioners are uniquely situated in the child welfare
15	system, and because victims of abuse cannot be treated and cared for if the abuse is not
16	identified, it is important that health practitioners are empowered to the greatest extent
17	possible to carry out their duties as mandatory reporters of child abuse; and
18	WHEREAS, access to information on reports of prior abuse or neglect of a certain
19	child could make the difference in whether a health practitioner is able to identify an
20	instance of abuse of that child.
21	THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
22	urge and request the Department of Children and Family Services and the Department of
23	Health and Hospitals, jointly, to study prospective implementation of an information system
24	that would enhance the ability of health practitioners to identify child abuse.
25	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study to be conducted by the departments
26	shall include an analysis of the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of operating a system
27	through which health practitioners may access information on whether a specific child has
28	been the subject of a prior report of suspected abuse or neglect.
29	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in performing the analysis of the prospective
30	information system requested by this Resolution, the departments shall consider the extent

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1 to which the system could be incorporated within existing technology infrastructure of the

- 2 state, and shall prioritize cost-minimizing options for implementing the system.
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the departments, jointly, shall submit a written
- 4 report of recommendations for implementation of the system described in this Resolution,
- 5 along with any other findings and recommendations relative to enhancing the ability of
- 6 health practitioners to identify child abuse, to the House Committee on Health and Welfare
- 7 and the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare no later than sixty days prior to the
- 8 convening of the 2016 Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana.
- 9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
- secretary of the Department of Children and Family Services and the secretary of the
- 11 Department of Health and Hospitals.

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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Henry

Urges and requests the Dept. of Children and Family Services and the Dept. of Health and Hospitals, jointly, to study prospective implementation of an information system to enhance the ability of health practitioners to identify child abuse.

Requests that in conducting the study, the departments consider the extent to which the system could be incorporated within existing technology infrastructure of the state.

Requests that the departments report findings of the study and recommendations to the legislative committees on health and welfare no later than 60 days prior to the convening of the 2016 RS.