

2016 Regular Session

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 11

BY SENATOR BOUDREAUX

VITAL STATISTICS. Directs the Department of Health and Hospitals to evaluate and report on increasing access to vital records at parish health units.

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Department of Health and Hospitals to evaluate and report on access to vital records at parish health units.

WHEREAS, public access to essential vital records, namely birth certificates, is a core function of public service that should be provided by the Department of Health and Hospitals; and

WHEREAS, citizens need immediate access to birth certificates for a whole myriad of reasons, including but not limited to registration for children in day care, schools, camps, sports events and other recreational activities, job applications, passport applications, and other events that mark milestones in a person's life; and

WHEREAS, at one time it was believed that the Department of Health and Hospitals made immediate access to birth certificates available in most, if not all, parish health units throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, in recent years alternative access strategies have been attempted that eliminated immediate access to vital records in parish health units and instead offered citizens the opportunity to order a birth certificate via kiosk machine in nine parishes; provided immediate access through clerks of court in forty parishes; provided for Internet and phone ordering; and provided immediate walk-in service only at the New Orleans Vital

1 Records Cental Office; and

2 WHEREAS, the kiosks located in nine parish health units have proven to be difficult
3 to manage in many instances, do not allow for customer assistance, and require the citizen
4 to order a birth certificate electronically with an additional shipping and security fee in
5 addition to the cost of the birth certificate; and

6 WHEREAS, the clerks of court provide immediate access to birth certificates in forty
7 parishes, but at a fee of nine dollars more per record than what would have been paid in the
8 parish health unit; and

9 WHEREAS, ordering a birth certificate on the phone or via the Internet also requires
10 the citizen to pay additional shipping and security fees and wait for the vital record to be
11 shipped; and

12 WHEREAS, the only location made available by the Department of Health and
13 Hospitals for immediate walk-in service is the New Orleans Vital Records Office in Benson
14 Tower which is not easily accessible by the public and does not offer free or convenient
15 parking.

16 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
17 urge and request the Department of Health and Hospitals to evaluate and report on increasing
18 access to vital records at parish health units.

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department shall include in its evaluation
20 data regarding the number of parish health units that previously provided for immediate
21 access to vital records and the number of records produced by each parish health unit
22 annually; the qualifications needed for a staff member at a parish health unit to print a vital
23 record; and the cost of the contract with the kiosk vendor.

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department should evaluate data to develop
25 a proposal to increase immediate walk-in access to vital records at parish health units based
26 on criteria established by the department if such access cannot be made available at all
27 sixty-four parish health units, such as population or geographical location based.

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of the department's evaluation and report
29 on access to vital records at parish health units shall be submitted to the legislature no later
30 than October 1, 2016.

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

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Christine Arbo Peck.

	DIGEST	
SCR 11 Engrossed	2016 Regular Session	Boudreaux

Requests the Department of Health and Hospitals to evaluate and report on access to vital records at parish health units.