SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 11

BY SENATOR REESE

EMPLOYMENT. Urges and requests certain state agencies and private businesses in Louisiana to recognize the value that justice-involved persons can bring to the workforce and society and to act with intention to empower, train, and employ such individuals.

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request certain state agencies and private businesses in Louisiana to recognize the value that justice-involved persons can bring to the workforce and society and to act with intention to empower, train, and employ such individuals.

WHEREAS, the Justice Reinvestment Initiatives of 2017 and other criminal justice reforms should be maintained with a renewed focus on reentry to remove barriers to employment and to facilitate gainful employment for reentering citizens; and

WHEREAS, Act No. 261 of the 2017 Regular Session reinvested a portion of JRI savings back into reentry programming; and

WHEREAS, in 2020, Reentry Ready Louisiana provided for the Act which originated as Senate Bill No. 354 requiring the Department of Public Safety and Corrections, corrections services, to provide an identification card to those released listing all classes, certificates, and training obtained during incarceration; and

WHEREAS, in 2020, Reentry Ready Louisiana provided for the Act which originated as House Bill No. 77 requiring Probation and Parole to make reasonable accommodations for probationers and parolees who are employed, including video check-in so employees don't have to leave work; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 has contributed to an uncertain employment climate in
WHEREAS, justice-involved persons have unique employment challenges which are compounded by Louisiana's uncertain economic landscape; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana should not regress and cannot risk an increase in recidivism and crime rates if it wants to retain, grow, and attract business and talent; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative that Louisiana grows its workforce and its tax base; and

WHEREAS, hiring justice-involved persons reduces recidivism and crime rates.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request:

(1) The Louisiana division of administration, Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections, corrections services, Louisiana Workforce Commission, Louisiana Community and Technical College System, and private businesses in the state of Louisiana recognize the value that justice-involved persons can bring to the workforce and society, and act with intention to empower, train, and employ such individuals.

(2) The people of Louisiana recognize that justice-involved persons are doing essential work in response to COVID-19; many justice-involved persons are essential workers responding to COVID-19.

(3) The Department of Public Safety and Corrections, corrections services, and the Louisiana Workforce Commission align on Job Skill Training programs provided by the Louisiana Community and Technical College System and Industry Based Certification Programs offered in the Department of Public Safety and Corrections, corrections services, prisons in order to remove licensing barriers and/or open pathways to licensure for justice-involved persons, both during and after incarceration.

(4) The Department of Public Safety and Corrections, corrections services, continues its work on ReAP, a result of LA-PRI, which provides evidence-based guidance to the justice-involved person, corrections services staff, the courts, Parole Board, probation and parole, local jails, and community resource partners.

(5) The Department of Public Safety and Corrections, corrections services, continues working with community resource partners and utilizes technology to facilitate contact with prospective employers and incarcerated persons prior to their release.
(6) The allocation of state general fund dollars and JRI savings continue and expand the Department of Public Safety and Corrections, corrections services, Reentry Initiatives and Programs in its facilities and incentivizes sheriffs with those local facilities with which it contracts to expand their reentry initiatives and evidence-based transitional employment programs to all state prisoners.

(7) The Louisiana Workforce Commission and Department of Public Safety and Corrections, corrections services, creates evidence-based transitional employment opportunities for returning citizens and encourages connections between Louisiana businesses and reentry organizations through increased awareness of the commission's bonding capacity and tax credits for businesses which hire justice-involved persons.

(8) The Louisiana Workforce Commission partners with business trade organizations to increase awareness of incentives offered to businesses hiring justice-involved persons.

(9) Louisiana employers hire justice-involved persons who are referred by established reentry organizations.

(10) The division of administration to prioritize and seek to fund reentry initiatives with any future allotments of federal funding related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the governor of Louisiana, the commissioner of administration, the Louisiana Workforce Commission, the Department of Public Safety and Corrections, corrections services, and the Louisiana Community and Technical College System.

The original instrument was prepared by Jerry J. Guillot. The following digest, which does not constitute a part of the legislative instrument, was prepared by Yoursheka George.

DIGEST
SCR 11 Engrossed 2020 First Extraordinary Session Reese

Requests:

(1) The division of administration, Department of Public Safety and Corrections, corrections services (DOC), La. Workforce Commission, Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS), and private businesses in the state recognize the value that justice-involved persons can bring to the workforce and society, and act with intention to empower, train, and employ such individuals.

(2) The people of Louisiana recognize that justice-involved persons are doing essential work in response to COVID-19, many justice-involved persons are essential workers responding to COVID-19.
(3) The DOC and the La. Workforce Commission align on Job Skill Training programs provided by the LCTCS and Industry Based Certification Programs offered in DOC prisons in order to remove licensing barriers and/or open pathways to licensure for justice-involved persons, both during and after incarceration.

(4) The DOC continues its work on ReAP, a result of LA-PRI, which provides evidence-based guidance to justice-involved persons, corrections services staff, the courts, Parole Board, probation and parole, local jails and community resource partners.

(5) The DOC continues working with community resource partners and utilizes technology to facilitate contact with prospective employers and incarcerated persons prior to their release.

(6) The allocation of state general fund dollars and JRI savings continue and expand the DOC's Reentry Initiatives and Programs in its facilities and incentivize sheriffs with those local facilities with which it contracts to expand their reentry initiatives and evidence-based transitional employment programs to all state prisoners.

(7) The La. Workforce Commission and DOC create evidence-based transitional employment opportunities for returning citizens and encourage connections between Louisiana businesses and reentry organizations through increased awareness of commission's bonding capacity and tax credits for businesses which hire justice-involved persons.

(8) The La. Workforce Commission partners with business trade organizations to increase awareness of incentives offered to businesses hiring justice-involved persons.

(9) Louisiana employers hire justice-involved persons who are referred by established reentry organizations.

(10) The division of administration to prioritize and seek to fund reentry initiatives with any future allotments of federal funding related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

Committee Amendments Proposed by Senate Committee on Labor and Industrial Relations to the original bill

1. Requests the division of administration to prioritize and seek to fund reentry initiatives with any future allotments of COVID-19 federal funding.