

2015 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 69

BY REPRESENTATIVES CARMODY, ARMES, BADON, BARROW, WESLEY BISHOP, BOUIE, BURRELL, COX, EDWARDS, GUILLORY, HARRISON, HOFFMANN, HONORE, HUNTER, PEARSON, PRICE, PYLANT, SCHRODER, ST. GERMAIN, AND ALFRED WILLIAMS

A RESOLUTION

To direct the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Department of Health and Hospitals to study and evaluate the effectiveness of the abstinence-emphasis sex education curriculum used in public schools throughout the state on limiting the spread of sexually transmitted diseases and decreasing the rates of teen pregnancy, and to submit a written report of findings and recommendations to the House of Representatives.

WHEREAS, according to the office of public health of the Department of Health and Hospitals, Louisiana's rates of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, are among the highest in the nation, and Louisiana also has very high teen pregnancy rates; and

WHEREAS, education is key in reducing rates of sexually transmitted diseases and teen pregnancy, thus building stronger families and a healthier future for Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, R.S. 17:281 authorizes any public elementary or secondary school in Louisiana to offer instruction in sex education, and each city, parish, and other local public school system may select its own sex education curriculum; and

WHEREAS, R.S. 17:281(A)(4) specifically requires the major emphasis of any sex education instruction offered in the public schools of this state to be the encouragement of sexual abstinence between unmarried persons; and

WHEREAS, R.S. 46:2552 requires the state superintendent of education, the secretary of the Department of Children and Family Services, and the secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals to meet together not less than twice annually to review

and evaluate the effectiveness of current state programs, including but not limited to sex education provided by public schools, aimed at reducing the rate of teen pregnancy and preventing the spread of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases among the youth of Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, in order to fulfill the state's constitutional duty of affording every person an equal opportunity to develop to his full potential, it is imperative that the sex education curriculum provided throughout the state receive a thorough evaluation so that determinations can be made as to how the state can best provide experiences and opportunities to students that help them succeed in all aspects of life.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby direct the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Department of Health and Hospitals to study and evaluate the effectiveness of the sex education curriculum used in public schools throughout the state on limiting the spread of sexually transmitted diseases and decreasing the rates of teen pregnancy, and to submit a written report of findings and recommendations to the House of Representatives not later than sixty days prior to the beginning of the 2016 Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report shall include, at a minimum, all of the following information:

(1) The number of cases of sexually transmitted diseases and teen pregnancy for each parish in the state for the previous twenty years.

(2) The date of when the "abstinence only" sexual education curriculum policy was adopted by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

(3) The date the "abstinence only" sexual education curriculum policy was officially implemented in public schools by the school board of each parish and a detailed explanation of the program used by each school district to present the information to students.

(4) An evaluation of the true effect of the "abstinence only" curriculum on the overall health of Louisiana school-aged youth and young adults for the state as a whole as well as on a parish by parish basis.

(5) A plan of action to increase the effectiveness of the sex education curriculum used in this state including policy and administrative changes that can be implemented immediately as well as recommendations for necessary legislation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the president of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES