

2017 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 138

BY SENATOR WHITE

COMMENDATIONS. Commends J. Ruth Kennedy upon her retirement after 37 years of service with the Louisiana Department of Health.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To commend J. Ruth Kennedy upon her retirement after thirty-seven years of service to the  
3 citizens of Louisiana at the Louisiana Department of Health.

4 WHEREAS, Ruth Kennedy is a graduate of Southeastern Louisiana University in  
5 Hammond; and

6 WHEREAS, Ms. Kennedy began her Medicaid career working in a field eligibility  
7 office and has held several other positions within Louisiana's Medicaid program such as  
8 Medicaid Deputy Director, CHIP Director, Bayou Health Project Manager, and Louisiana's  
9 Medicaid Director; and

10 WHEREAS, beginning in 1998, Ruth was responsible for the implementation and  
11 oversight of the outreach, enrollment, retention, eligibility simplification, and organizational  
12 change efforts that resulted in Louisiana's dramatic reduction in the percentage of uninsured  
13 children; and

14 WHEREAS, Ruth Kennedy directed the design, development, and implementation  
15 of then Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals' transformational Medicaid managed  
16 care initiative, Bayou Health; and

17 WHEREAS, in the implementation of the successful Louisiana Medicaid managed  
18 care program, Ruth reviewed Medicaid managed care programs in more than two dozen

1 states and worked with staff to develop the best possible model for Louisiana; and

2 WHEREAS, Bayou Health and now Healthy Louisiana has brought access to quality  
3 healthcare to millions of Louisiana residents with the Medicaid managed care organizations  
4 in reporting year 2016 having substantial improvements on 20 of 22 HEDIS performing  
5 metrics, and performing above the South Central 50th percentile on 11 of those 22 HEDIS  
6 performance metrics; and

7 WHEREAS, Medicaid managed care has saved the state taxpayers over four hundred  
8 plus million dollars annually when compared to the costs of fee for services; and

9 WHEREAS, Ruth has been a recipient of numerous awards and accolades for her  
10 work, such as the Charles E. Dunbar Jr. Career Service Award (given to an individual  
11 employed in state, municipal, or local classified service in recognition of exemplary service,  
12 commitment to classified service, contributions to improvement in the workplace and  
13 volunteer community activities) and the Louisiana Jimmie Davis Sunshine Award  
14 (recognizes a public servant who brings "sunshine" into the lives of Louisiana); and

15 WHEREAS, upon the executive order of Governor John Bel Edwards, the state of  
16 Louisiana expanded Medicaid eligibility, and Ms. Kennedy was charged with the enrollment  
17 which has been a resounding success with approximately 418,000 individuals enrolled as of  
18 April 17, 2017; and

19 WHEREAS, Ruth's innovative processes for enrollment with the Medicaid  
20 Expansion has been nationally recognized and has become a model for other states and only  
21 added to her reputation across America as an expert in Medicaid and CHIP; and

22 WHEREAS, J. Ruth Kennedy will successfully retire after tirelessly serving not only  
23 the most vulnerable citizens of our state but all citizens of our state.

24 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does  
25 hereby commend J. Ruth Kennedy upon her retirement after thirty-seven years of service  
26 with the Louisiana Department of Health and does hereby express sincere hopes and prayers  
27 for a long and happy retirement.

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Ruth  
29 Kennedy.

