
DIGEST

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HB 449 Reengrossed

2018 Regular Session

Edmonds

Abstract: Provides relative to information on adoption to be conveyed pursuant to laws relative to informed consent to an abortion.

Proposed law provides that it may be referred to as the "Adoption Option Act".

Present law requires the La. Dept. of Health (LDH) to publish an abortion alternatives and informed consent website. Provides for information to be featured on the website including information on adoption.

Proposed law retains present law and stipulates that the website shall feature information on adoption agencies that are not affiliated with an abortion provider, along with easily comprehensible first steps to aid pregnant women seeking to confidentially explore the option of placing her child for adoption, and indicating whether the adoption agency allows the woman to choose the adoptive parents.

Proposed law requires that the online adoption-related information required by proposed law be featured on a website created and maintained by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), linked on the LDH website, and accessible by redirecting from the domain name AdoptionOption.La.Gov.

Present law requires LDH to publish printed materials which abortion providers are required to give to a woman prior to an abortion in order for consent to the abortion to be deemed voluntary and informed.

Proposed law retains present law and adds thereto a requirement that such materials include the adoption-related information provided on the abortion alternatives and informed consent website, along with a list of entities which offer free and confidential counseling to a woman considering placing her child for adoption. Stipulates that such list shall not include any facility that counsels, refers, performs, induces, prescribes, or provides any means for abortion.

Proposed law creates a task force within LDH to assist the secretary of the department in the preparation of the printed and Internet materials provided for in present law and proposed law, and to develop public education initiatives to publicize such information on abortion alternatives. Provides that the task force shall be composed of the following members:

- (1) Up to two licensed clinical social workers licensed by the La. State Board of Social Work Examiners, each of whom shall have experience in assisting birth mothers in navigating the

adoption process, appointed by the governor.

- (2) Up to two La. residents who provide pre-abortion or post-abortion counseling in association with a nonprofit organization that does not counsel for or provide abortion, appointed by the governor.
- (3) Up to two attorneys licensed in La. and employed by nonprofit organizations who specialize in advocacy for women at risk of being coerced into abortion, or who specialize in navigating the adoption process, appointed by the governor.
- (4) Up to two La. residents who are employed by public or private nonprofit adoption agencies, appointed by the governor.
- (5) Up to two executive directors of La. nonprofit organizations that promote adoption as an alternative to abortion, or their designees.
- (6) Two members of the Senate appointed by the president.
- (7) Two members of the House of Representatives appointed by the speaker.
- (8) The secretary of LDH or his designee, who shall serve as a co-chairperson of the task force.
- (9) The secretary of DCFS or his designee, who shall serve as a co-chairperson of the task force.

Proposed law requires LDH to prepare and make publicly available the printed and Internet materials provided for in present law and proposed law on or before April 8, 2019.

(Amends R.S. 40:1061.17(C)(1)(e) and (D)(intro. para.) and (2); Adds R.S. 40:1061.17.1)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The House Floor Amendments to the engrossed bill:

1. Revise proposed law to provide that the online adoption-related information required by proposed law be featured on a website created and maintained by the Department of Children and Family Services, linked on the La. Department of Health's website, and accessible by redirecting from the domain name AdoptionOption.La.Gov.
2. Provide that the task force established by proposed law is created within the La. Department of Health, and that its purpose is to advise the secretary of the department in the preparation of materials an abortion alternatives required by present law and proposed law.
3. Provide that the following members of the task force established by proposed law be appointed by the governor:

- a. Up to two licensed clinical social workers licensed by the La. State Board of Social Work Examiners, each of whom shall have experience in assisting birth mothers in navigating the adoption process.
 - b. Up to two La. residents who provide pre-abortion or post-abortion counseling in association with a nonprofit organization that does not counsel for or provide abortion.
 - c. Up to two attorneys licensed in La. and employed by nonprofit organizations who specialize in advocacy for women at risk of being coerced into abortion, or who specialize in navigating the adoption process.
 - d. Up to two La. residents who are employed by public or private nonprofit adoption agencies.
4. Add the secretary of the Department of Children and Family Services or his designee as a task force member and provide that he and the secretary of the La. Department of Health shall co-chair the task force.
 5. Require that the La. Department of Health prepare and make publicly available the printed and Internet materials provided for in present law and proposed law on or before April 8, 2019.