

2020 First Extraordinary Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 33

BY REPRESENTATIVES HILFERTY, DAVIS, DUPLESSIS, FREEMAN, GREEN,
HUGHES, LANDRY, DUSTIN MILLER, NEWELL, STAGNI, WHITE, AND
WILLARD

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to recommend and make publicly available standards and curricula on the subject of implicit bias in the delivery of health care for use by health professional education programs and health professional licensing boards.

WHEREAS, prior to and during the COVID-19 pandemic, healthcare professionals have been among the most valued and trusted workers in our state and nation; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana's healthcare workers have performed heroically and made incredible sacrifices in fulfilling their professional calling during our state's response to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, like all other persons, regardless of background, culture, or creed, healthcare professionals carry with them ingrained and often unconscious assumptions about the people with whom they interact in their day-to-day lives and work; and

WHEREAS, collectively, these assumptions can manifest in a characteristic known as implicit bias; and

WHEREAS, implicit bias, which is also referred to as unconscious bias, refers to the attitudes and beliefs about other people that affect our understanding, decisions, and actions in an unconscious manner; and

WHEREAS, our attitudes and beliefs affect how we treat individuals based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, age, and appearance, and this dynamic can be especially pronounced in health care; and

WHEREAS, a growing body of evidence indicates that implicit bias in the delivery of health care leads to poorer health outcomes, increases in the cost of care, and the widening of health disparities; and

WHEREAS, Title 37 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, which encompasses laws relative to professions and occupations, provides for licensure and regulation of all of the following healthcare practitioners: acupuncturists; addiction counselors; athletic trainers; audiologists; behavior analysts; chiropractors; clinical exercise physiologists; dentists; dietitians and nutritionists; direct service workers; marriage and family therapists; medical psychologists; medication attendants; mental health counselors; midwives; nurses, including licensed practical nurses, registered nurses, and advanced practice registered nurses; nursing facility administrators; occupational therapists; optometrists; perfusionists; pharmacists; physical therapists; physician assistants; physicians; polysomnographic health professionals; professional counselors; psychologists; rehabilitation counselors; respiratory therapists; social workers; and speech-language pathologists; and

WHEREAS, in caring for and striving to improve the health and well-being of people, members of all licensed health professions engage in work that is highly personal in nature, thus it is essential that all health professionals know the importance of understanding and treating the whole person; and

WHEREAS, instituting curricula and training initiatives which address implicit bias in health care will empower Louisiana's health professionals to have a greater positive impact on the lives of the people they treat and will improve the overall quality of health care delivered to the people of our state.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health, through its office of community partnerships and health equity or any other division deemed appropriate by the secretary of the department, to recommend and make publicly available standards and curricula on implicit bias for the various types of licensed health professionals in this state.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request each school of medicine, nursing, and allied health in this state to compare its current training and educational curricula on implicit bias with the recommended standards and curricula published by the Louisiana Department of Health in accordance with this Resolution, and to adopt or adapt the recommended standards and curricula for its health professional education programs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request each health professional licensing board of this state to work with the office of community partnerships and health equity of the Louisiana Department of Health to offer to its licensees training on implicit bias that aligns with the recommended standards and curricula published by the department in accordance with this Resolution, and to consider instituting completion of training on implicit bias as a requirement for licensure.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health, the director of boards and commissions of the office of the governor, the commissioner of higher education, and the chairperson of the Louisiana Health Works Commission.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES