

Regular Session, 2009

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 45

BY REPRESENTATIVE WILLMOTT

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request each nonpublic high school to provide students at least thirty minutes of classroom instruction each year in health education or a comparable course determined to be appropriate by the school's governing authority relative to the state's safe haven relinquishments law, Children's Code Articles 1149 through 1160.

WHEREAS, Children's Code Articles 1149 through 1160 contain provisions collectively known as the Safe Haven Law and provide a mechanism whereby any parent may relinquish the care of an infant who is not more than thirty days old to the state in safety and anonymity without fear of prosecution; and

WHEREAS, under certain circumstances, parents may give up custody of an infant with no questions asked when leaving the baby in the care of an employee at a Safe Haven facility; and

WHEREAS, the Safe Haven Law offers a loving alternative to newborn abandonment; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana's teenagers sometimes face unintended pregnancies, and they must be made aware that if they or someone they know is not ready to take care of a newborn, this law offers parents a safe, legal option; and

WHEREAS, steps must be taken to educate teenagers about the provisions of the Safe Haven Law, which is designed to protect both parents and babies from harm.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request each nonpublic high school to provide to students at least thirty minutes of age- and grade-appropriate classroom instruction each year in health education or a comparable course determined to be appropriate by the school's governing authority relative to the state's safe haven relinquishments law, Children's Code Articles 1149 through 1160.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that such instruction should include but not be limited to providing students with the following information:

(1) An explanation that relinquishment of an infant means to give over possession or control of the infant to other specified persons as provided by law with the settled intent to forego all parental responsibilities.

(2) The process to be followed by a parent in making a relinquishment.

(3) The general locations where an infant may be left in the care of others.

(4) The toll-free number established by the Louisiana Department of Social Services to direct individuals to designated emergency care facilities.

(5) The available options if a parent is unable to travel to a designated emergency care facility.

(6) The process by which a relinquishing parent may reclaim parental rights to the infant and the timelines established for taking this action.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the chair of the Nonpublic School Commission.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE