

Regular Session, 2013

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 121

BY SENATOR MORRELL

LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR. Requests the legislative auditor to review certain crime statistics for the city of New Orleans.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the legislative auditor to review certain crime data and statistics for the  
3 city of New Orleans.

4 WHEREAS, the city of New Orleans has a shockingly low ratio of gun assaults per  
5 murder compared to national averages; and

6 WHEREAS, in 2010 the city's gun assaults per murder ratio was among the lowest  
7 in the country and it was even lower in 2012; and

8 WHEREAS, in 2010 in the city of New Orleans there were approximately seven gun  
9 assaults per murder and in 2012 there were approximately four gun assaults per murder; and

10 WHEREAS, according to an analysis of federal crime data by NOLA.com/The  
11 Times-Picayune, New Orleans has consistently ranked first or second in murder rate among  
12 cities with a population of one hundred thousand or more during the past decade, but it  
13 consistently ranks at or near the bottom of the fifty most murderous cities in the country in  
14 the ratio of gun assaults to murder; and

15 WHEREAS, the violent crime rate for the city of New Orleans is roughly one-half  
16 the average of the twenty most murderous cities in America and twice as high than the  
17 average for all large cities; and

18 WHEREAS, aggravated assaults and robberies are far more common than rapes and

1 murders, and thus far more important in determining a city's violent crime rate; and

2 WHEREAS, criminologists have determined that murder is the most reliable statistic  
3 and that violent crime usually moves in tandem with murder, but New Orleans has a lower  
4 rate of violent crime than any other city with a murder epidemic; and

5 WHEREAS, Rick Rosenfeld, a criminologist at the University of Missouri-St. Louis  
6 who specializes in crime statistics, noted that the ratio of aggravated assaults to murders has  
7 been falling precipitously in New Orleans since the mid-1990's, much faster than the rate of  
8 killings; and

9 WHEREAS, aggravated assaults are essentially unsuccessful murders, and there is  
10 no evidence that emergency medical care in New Orleans has been on a steady decline; and

11 WHEREAS, aggravated assaults with guns reported by the New Orleans Police  
12 Department have fallen sixty-four percent since 1997; and

13 WHEREAS, since 1997 the number of shooting victims treated at Charity Hospital  
14 or the Interim LSU Hospital, the area's only Level 1 trauma center, have fallen by sixteen  
15 percent; and

16 WHEREAS, because gun assaults and murders tend to stem from the same violent  
17 impulses, criminologists expect to see a relationship between the two numbers, but New  
18 Orleans gun assault per murder ratio has decreased significantly during the past twenty years  
19 which is causing national speculation that the New Orleans Police Department may be under  
20 reporting or misclasssifying certain crimes; and

21 WHEREAS, millions of dollars in public funds have been expended on the crime  
22 reporting system in the city of New Orleans.

23 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana  
24 does hereby urge and request the legislative auditor to review certain crime data and  
25 statistics for the city of New Orleans and make a report of his findings to the Senate  
26 Committee on Judiciary B.

27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the  
28 legislative auditor.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Cathy Wells.

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DIGEST

Morrell

SR No. 121

Requests the legislative auditor to review certain crime data and statistics for the city of New Orleans and make a report of his findings to the Senate Committee on Judiciary B.