

2018 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 134

BY REPRESENTATIVE SMITH

CORRECTIONS/PRISONERS: Requests the Department of Public Safety and Corrections and other penal institutions that provide inmate training to provide access to training for inmates who are deaf and hard of hearing

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the Department of Public Safety and Corrections and other penal  
3 institutions that provide inmate training to provide access to training for inmates who  
4 are deaf and hard of hearing.

5 WHEREAS, across the country, there is ample evidence that penal institutions do not  
6 provide adequate resources for deaf and hard of hearing inmates; and

7 WHEREAS, deaf and hard of hearing inmates are frequently denied access to  
8 training programs because prison administrators fail to understand their communication  
9 needs; and

10 WHEREAS, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination  
11 against persons with disabilities in programs that receive federal financial assistance; and

12 WHEREAS, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act extends the prohibition  
13 on discrimination against persons with disabilities to inmates in all state and local facilities;  
14 and

15 WHEREAS, according to the National Association for the Deaf, prisons must  
16 provide qualified interpreters, real-time captioning, assistive listening devices, or other  
17 auxiliary aids or services when necessary to ensure effective communication when a deaf  
18 or hard of hearing inmate wishes to participate in a class offered to inmates; and

1           WHEREAS, when a requested accommodation would result in an undue burden, the  
2 prison must take any other action it can to ensure communication for a deaf and hard of  
3 hearing inmate is as effective as possible; and

4           WHEREAS, many deaf and hard of hearing inmates feel as though they serve longer  
5 sentences than other inmates because they do not have access to college courses and other  
6 programs that allow for an earlier release; and

7           WHEREAS, Sign Language Services International, Inc., has administered programs  
8 to inmates housed at Elayn Hunt Correctional Center; these programs certify inmates as sign  
9 language interpreters; and

10          WHEREAS, some inmates who have graduated from such programs accept jobs in  
11 the sign language interpretation field upon their release from prison; and

12          WHEREAS, if more inmates learn sign language, they can serve as daily motivators  
13 to help inmates who are deaf and hard of hearing access other training programs offered in  
14 prison.

15          THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the  
16 Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Department of Public Safety and  
17 Corrections and other penal institutions that provide inmate training to provide access to  
18 training for inmates who are deaf and hard of hearing.

19          BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted  
20 to the Department of Public Safety and Corrections.

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#### DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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HR 134 Original

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