

2019 Regular Session

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 41

BY SENATOR WHITE

LAW ENFORCEMENT. Creates the Law Enforcement PTSD Study Commission.

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A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To create and provide for the Law Enforcement Officer PTSD Study Commission to study the short-term and long-term effects of post traumatic stress disorder on law enforcement officers and to recommend any action or legislation that the commission deems necessary or appropriate.

WHEREAS, the state of Louisiana is served by over eighteen thousand law enforcement officers at the state and local level; and

WHEREAS, the diagnosis known as post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) was first defined by the American Psychiatric Association in 1980 in order to more accurately understand and treat veterans who had endured severe, traumatic combat stress; and

WHEREAS, PTSD can occur as a result of severely traumatic events including but not limited to sexual assault, child abuse, high-impact collisions and crashes, natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and military combat; and

WHEREAS, policing often necessitates exposure to traumatic, violent, and horrific events, which trauma can have negative effects on law enforcement officers' health and well-being, and can lead to an increased risk for developing PTSD; and

WHEREAS, studies have found that law enforcement officers experience approximately 3.5 traumatic events in a six-month period, most often involving being

1 witness to tragic and depressing events, such as adults and children who have been severely
2 injured or died from abuse, assault, or traffic accidents; and

3 WHEREAS, studies have also found that more than three-quarters of law
4 enforcement officers reported a traumatic event occurring in the previous month; and

5 WHEREAS, although PTSD is typically associated with a single incident, it is often
6 caused by exposure to numerous traumatic incidents over several years or, in some cases,
7 an entire career; and

8 WHEREAS, it is in the public interest to identify and diagnose PTSD in law
9 enforcement officers, with the ultimate goal of those law enforcement officers suffering from
10 PTSD being able to receive treatment, retain employment, and remain productive employees
11 of their agencies; and

12 WHEREAS, it is imperative that PTSD suffered by law enforcement officers be
13 recognized as compensable under worker's compensation, as an invaluable part of the
14 treatment of this disorder.

15 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana hereby creates
16 the Law Enforcement Officer PTSD Study Commission to study the conditions, needs,
17 issues, and problems relative to the short-term and long-term effects of post traumatic stress
18 disorder on law enforcement officers and to recommend any action or legislation that the
19 commission deems necessary or appropriate.

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission created herein shall consist of
21 the following thirteen members:

- 22 (1) The chairman of the Senate Committee on Judiciary C, or his designee.
- 23 (2) The chairman of the House Committee on Administration of Criminal
24 Justice, or his designee.
- 25 (3) Two sheriffs selected by the Louisiana Sheriffs' Association, or their
26 designees.
- 27 (4) Two chiefs of police selected by the Louisiana Association of Chiefs of
28 Police, or their designees.
- 29 (5) Two persons selected by the Louisiana Fraternal Order of Police, or their
30 designees.

1 (6) A person selected by the Louisiana Municipal Association, or his designee.

2 (7) A psychologist selected by the Louisiana Psychological Association, or his
3 designee.

4 (8) A psychiatrist selected by the Louisiana Psychiatric Medical Association, or
5 his designee.

6 (9) A physician selected by the Louisiana Academy of Family Physicians, or his
7 designee.

8 (10) A person selected by the Ochsner Health System, or his designee.

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in conducting such study, the commission shall
10 review causes of PTSD among law enforcement officers in Louisiana and identify the
11 estimated prevalence of PTSD among law enforcement officers in Louisiana. The
12 commission also shall identify and analyze methods, practices, and programs to prevent and
13 treat PTSD in police officers. The commission also shall make recommendations for which
14 methods, practices, and programs, including existing programs in the state, are most
15 effective in preventing and treating PTSD in law enforcement officers.

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all selections of members to the commission
17 shall be made and submitted to the chairman of the Senate Committee on Judiciary C within
18 sixty days after adjournment of the 2019 Regular Session. Vacancies shall be filled in the
19 same manner as the original appointments. The members of the commission shall serve
20 without compensation, except per diem or expense reimbursement to which they may be
21 individually entitled as members of the constituent organizations.

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a majority of the total membership shall
23 constitute a quorum of the commission, and any official action by the commission shall
24 require an affirmative vote of a majority of the quorum present and voting.

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission may conduct such meetings at
26 such times as it may deem necessary or convenient to enable it to exercise fully and
27 effectively its powers, perform its duties, and accomplish the objectives and purposes of this
28 Resolution. The first meeting of the commission shall be held on or before September 1,
29 2019, at the call of the chairman of the Senate Committee on Judiciary C, at which meeting
30 its members shall elect from the membership a chairperson and vice chairperson, and such

1 other officers as the commission may deem advisable.

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in the event that the commission makes a report
3 of its findings and recommendations with suggestions for proposed legislation, if any, such
4 report shall be made to the legislature no later than January 9, 2020.

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this commission shall terminate on January 10,
6 2020.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Alden A. Clement Jr.

DIGEST

SCR 41 Original 2019 Regular Session White

Creates the Law Enforcement Officer PTSD Study Commission to study the short-term and long-term effects of post traumatic stress disorder on law enforcement officers and to recommend any action or legislation that the commission deems necessary or appropriate.

The commission will consist of the following members:

- (1) The chairman of the Senate Committee on Judiciary C, or his designee.
- (2) The chairman of the House Committee on Administration of Criminal Justice, or his designee.
- (3) Two sheriffs selected by the La. Sheriffs' Association, or their designees.
- (4) Two chiefs of police selected by the La. Association of Chiefs of Police, or their designees.
- (5) Two persons selected by the La. Fraternal Order of Police, or their designees.
- (6) A person selected by the La. Municipal Association, or his designee.
- (7) A psychologist selected by the La. Psychological Association, or his designee.
- (8) A psychiatrist selected by the La. Psychiatric Medical Association, or his designee.
- (9) A physician selected by the La. Academy of Family Physicians, or his designee.
- (10) A person selected by the Ochsner Health System, or his designee.

Provides that in conducting such study, the commission is to review causes of PTSD among law enforcement officers in Louisiana and identify the estimated prevalence of PTSD among law enforcement officers in Louisiana. Further provides that the commission is to identify and analyze methods, practices, and programs to prevent and treat PTSD in police officers. Further provides that the commission is to make recommendations for which methods, practices, and programs, including existing programs in the state, are most effective in preventing and treating PTSD in law enforcement officers.

Provides that selections of members to the commission are to be made and submitted to the chairman of the Senate Committee on Judiciary C within 60 days after adjournment of the 2019 Regular Session. Further provides that vacancies are to be filled in the same manner as the original appointments. The members of the task force are to serve without

compensation, except per diem or expense reimbursement to which they may be individually entitled as members of the constituent organizations.

Provides that a majority of the total membership constitutes a quorum of the commission, and any official action by the commission requires an affirmative vote of a majority of the quorum present and voting.

Provides that the commission may conduct such meetings at such times as it may deem necessary or convenient to enable it to exercise fully and effectively its powers, perform its duties, and accomplish the objectives and purposes of this Resolution. Further provides that the first meeting of the commission is to be held by 9/1/19 at the call of the chairman of the Senate Committee on Judiciary C, at which meeting its members are to elect from the membership a chairperson and vice chairperson, and such other officers as the commission may deem advisable.

Provides that if the commission makes a report of its findings and recommendations with suggestions for proposed legislation, if any, then such report must be made to the legislature no later than 1/9/20.

Provides that the commission will terminate on 1/10/20.