

2020 First Extraordinary Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 17

BY REPRESENTATIVE CARPENTER

EMPLOYMENT: Requests certain state agencies and private businesses to recognize the value that justice-involved persons bring to the workforce and society, and to act with the intention to empower, train, and employ such individuals

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the division of administration, the Department of Public Safety and
3 Corrections, the Louisiana Workforce Commission, the Louisiana Community and
4 Technical College System, and private businesses in Louisiana to recognize the value
5 that justice-involved persons bring to the workforce and society and to act with the
6 intention to empower, train, and employ such individuals.

7 WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to an uncertain employment
8 climate in Louisiana; and

9 WHEREAS, justice-involved persons have unique employment challenges which are
10 further compounded by Louisiana's uncertain economic landscape due to the COVID-19
11 pandemic; and

12 WHEREAS, hiring justice-involved persons reduces recidivism and crime rates; and

13 WHEREAS, it is imperative for Louisiana's workforce and tax base to continuously
14 grow, prosper, and attract business and talent while preventing any increase in recidivism
15 and crime rates; and

16 WHEREAS, the Justice Reinvestment Initiatives of 2017 and other criminal justice
17 reforms maintain a renewed focus on reentry to remove barriers to employment and to
18 facilitate gainful employment for reentering citizens; and

19 WHEREAS, the Legislature of Louisiana should allocate general fund dollars and
20 Justice Reinvestment Initiative savings to continue expanding the Department of Public

1 Safety and Correction's reentry initiatives and programs in its facilities and to continue
2 providing incentives to sheriffs; and

3 WHEREAS, Act No. 261 of the 2017 Regular Session of the Legislature reinvests
4 a portion of Justice Reinvestment Initiative savings back into reentry programming; and

5 WHEREAS, Act No. 226 of the 2020 Regular Session of the Legislature requires the
6 Department of Public Safety and Corrections to provide an identification card that lists all
7 vocational licensing and certification programs completed by an individual during his
8 incarceration; and

9 WHEREAS, Act No. 98 of the 2020 Regular Session of the Legislature requires
10 probation and parole officers to make reasonable accommodations, including the allowance
11 of simultaneous voice and video communication, for probationers and parolees who are
12 employed so that such employees can be physically present at work and still attend their
13 scheduled probation and parole meetings; and

14 WHEREAS, the people of Louisiana must recognize that many justice-involved
15 persons are essential workers responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and are valued
16 contributors to the state's workforce.

17 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
18 urge and request the division of administration, the Department of Public Safety and
19 Corrections, the Louisiana Workforce Commission, the Louisiana Community and Technical
20 College System, and private businesses in the state of Louisiana to recognize the value that
21 justice-involved persons can bring to the workforce and society and to act with the intention
22 to empower, train, and employ such individuals.

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge
24 and request all of the following:

25 (1) That the Department of Public Safety and Corrections and the Louisiana
26 Workforce Commission utilize the job skill training programs provided by the Louisiana
27 Community and Technical College System and industry-based certification programs offered
28 in Department of Public Safety and Corrections prisons to remove licensing barriers and
29 open pathways to licensure for justice-involved persons during and after incarceration.

1 (2) That the Department of Public Safety and Corrections and the Louisiana
2 Workforce Commission create evidence-based transitional employment opportunities for
3 returning citizens.

4 (3) That the Department of Public Safety and Corrections continue its work on the
5 Louisiana Prisoner Reentry Initiative's (LA-PRI) Reentry Accountability Plans (ReAP),
6 which provide evidence-based guidance to the justice-involved person, Department of Public
7 Safety and Corrections staff, the judicial system, the committee on parole, the division of
8 probation and parole, local jails, and community resource partners.

9 (4) That the Department of Public Safety and Corrections continue working with
10 community resource partners and continue utilizing technology to facilitate contact with
11 prospective employers and incarcerated persons prior to their release.

12 (5) That the Louisiana Workforce Commission establish connections between
13 Louisiana businesses and reentry organizations and business trade organizations to bring and
14 increase awareness of the Louisiana Workforce Commission's bonding capacity, tax credits,
15 and other incentives offered to businesses that hire justice-involved persons.

16 (6) That Louisiana employers hire justice-involved persons who are referred by
17 established reentry organizations.

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
19 secretary of the Department of Public Safety and Corrections, the secretary of the Louisiana
20 Workforce Commission, the chair of the Board of Supervisors of the Louisiana Community
21 and Technical College System, and the commissioner of administration.

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)]

HCR 17 Original

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Carpenter

Urges and requests the division of administration, the Dept. of Public Safety and Corrections, the La. Workforce Commission, the La. Community and Technical College System, and private businesses in La. to recognize the value that justice-involved persons bring to the workforce and society and to act with the intention to empower, train, and employ such individuals.