

2020 First Extraordinary Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 17

BY REPRESENTATIVES CARPENTER, ADAMS, BAGLEY, BRASS, BROWN, BRYANT, BUTLER, CARRIER, ROBBY CARTER, WILFORD CARTER, CORMIER, COUSSAN, DAVIS, DEVILLIER, DESHOTEL, EMERSON, FONTENOT, FREEMAN, FREIBERG, GAINES, GREEN, HARRIS, JEFFERSON, JENKINS, TRAVIS JOHNSON, JONES, LANDRY, LYONS, MARCELLE, MCCORMICK, MCKNIGHT, MOORE, NELSON, NEWELL, CHARLES OWEN, PIERRE, PRESSLY, ROMERO, STAGNI, THOMPSON, WHITE, WILLARD, AND SELDERS

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, justice-involved person is defined as an individual who has or  
14 previously had interactions with the criminal justice system as a defendant, which includes  
15 previously incarcerated individuals or individuals on probation and parole; and

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

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

7           WHEREAS, the Legislature of Louisiana should allocate general fund dollars and  
8 Justice Reinvestment Initiative savings to continue expanding the Department of Public  
9 Safety and Correction's reentry initiatives and programs in its facilities and to continue  
10 providing incentives to sheriffs; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

23 (6) That the division of administration prioritize and seek to fund reentry initiatives  
24 with any future allotments of federal funding related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

25 (7) That Louisiana employers hire justice-involved persons who are referred by  
26 established reentry organizations.

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

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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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HCR 17 Reengrossed

2020 First Extraordinary Session

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.

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Labor and Industrial Relations to the original bill:

1. Request the division of administration to prioritize and fund reentry initiatives with any future federal funding related to COVID-19.
2. Make technical changes.

The House Floor Amendments to the engrossed bill:

1. Define the term "justice-involved person" as an individual who has or previously had interactions with the criminal justice system as a defendant, which includes previously incarcerated individuals or individuals on probation and parole.