

2023 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 84

BY REPRESENTATIVES JORDAN, AMEDEE, CARPENTER, WILFORD CARTER, COX, FISHER, GAINES, GREEN, HUGHES, JEFFERSON, JENKINS, KNOX, LANDRY, LARVADAIN, LYONS, MARCELLE, NEWELL, PHELPS, PIERRE, SCHLEGEL, WILLARD, AND WRIGHT

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To create a task force to study suicide rates among African Americans in Louisiana and report its findings to the legislature no later than February 1, 2024.

WHEREAS, according to the Suicide Prevention Resource Center of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, African American adults were at the highest risk for past-year suicide attempts in 2019; and

WHEREAS, the Suicide Prevention Resource Center of the United States has reported a suicide rate peak during the adolescence and young adult life of African American populations from the year 2010 to 2019; and

WHEREAS, among those suicide deaths in the African American population, the suicide death rate for men has reached more than four times the rate of women; and

WHEREAS, the state of Louisiana has reported six and four-tenths African American deaths from suicide to every ten thousand person population in comparison to the seven and three-tenths rate reported for the United States; and

WHEREAS, WAFB, a Baton Rouge news station, reported in a 2021 broadcast that African American boys between the ages of five and twelve were more likely to die by suicide than any other age group; and

WHEREAS, WAFB also reported that suicides among African American children under eighteen years of age have increased by seventy-one percent over the past decade; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana's Suicide Prevention Plan states that although suicide death rates are significantly lower for African Americans in Louisiana in comparison to other states, this group has a high rate of suicide attempts and serious thoughts of suicide; and

WHEREAS, African Americans in Louisiana are considered a high-risk population for many negative health outcomes due to high risk factors such as homelessness, exposure to violence, psychological distress, family dysfunction, and exposure to racial inequality.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby create and provide for the Task Force on African American Suicide Rates to study death by suicide statistics for African Americans in this state and to propose any recommendations regarding suicide prevention.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall consist of the following members:

(1) The chairman of the House Committee on Judiciary, who shall serve as the chairman of the task force, or his designee.

(2) The chairman of the Senate Committee on Judiciary B or his designee.

(3) The chairman of the House Committee on Health and Welfare or his designee.

(4) The chairman of the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare or his designee.

(5) The secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health or his designee.

(6) The president of the Louisiana Psychiatric Medical Association or his designee.

(7) The president of the Louisiana Academy of Medical Psychologists or his designee.

(8) The chairman of the Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners or his designee.

(9) The president of the New Orleans Association of Black Social Workers or his designee.

(10) The president of the Louisiana Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers or his designee.

(11) The executive director of Baton Rouge Crisis Intervention Center or his designee.

(12) The president of the Louisiana Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People or his designee.

(13) The president of the YWCA Greater Baton Rouge area or his designee.

(14) The president of 100 Black Men of Baton Rouge or his designee.

(15) The president of the Urban League of Louisiana or his designee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each designating authority shall submit the name of its designee to the task force to the Louisiana Department of Health no later than July 15, 2023.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Department of Health shall provide staff support as needed by the task force.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that no later than August 1, 2023, the chairman of the task force shall convene the first meeting of the task force. At the first meeting, the members may elect a vice chairman and other officers as the task force deems appropriate.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a majority of the task force shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. All official actions of the task force shall require the affirmative vote of a majority of the members.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the task force shall serve without compensation, except per diem or expense reimbursement to which they may be individually entitled as members of their constituent organizations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force on African American Suicide Rates shall submit its findings in the form of a written report to the legislature and the David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library no later than February 1, 2024.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall terminate on the date of the submission of its findings from the study called for in this Resolution in the form of a report to the legislature or February 1, 2024, whichever occurs first.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health, the president of the Louisiana Psychiatric Medical Association, the president of the Louisiana Academy of Medical Psychologists, the chairman of the Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners, the president of the New Orleans Association of Black Social Workers, the president of the Louisiana Chapter of the

National Association of Social Workers, the executive director of Baton Rouge Crisis Intervention Center, the president of the Louisiana Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the president of the YWCA Greater Baton Rouge area, the president of 100 Black Men of Baton Rouge, and the president of the Urban League of Louisiana.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE