

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 76

BY SENATOR DUPLESSIS

A RESOLUTION

To request the Department of Children and Family Services to provide information regarding luggage provided to children who are removed from their homes or changing foster care placement.

WHEREAS, children who are removed from their home on an emergency basis are not given much time to pack their belongings and are often times given a trash bag to carry their items; and

WHEREAS, when children are given trash bags to transport their belongings, it sends the message that the children and their belongings are trash and have no value; and

WHEREAS, the children of Louisiana deserve to be treated with dignity and be given hope in these horrible situations; and

WHEREAS, in Louisiana, the Department of Children and Family Services' policy provides that foster parents can be reimbursed up to one hundred dollars for a one-time luggage expense or as approved by a foster care worker; and

WHEREAS, there is no requirement for children to be given luggage at the point they are being removed from their homes or when they are changing foster care placement; and

WHEREAS, Maryland, Texas, and Oregon have passed laws in recent years to prohibit the use of trash bags to transport the belongings of children being removed from their home or changing foster care placement; and

WHEREAS, these laws require the state's respective department of human services to establish and maintain a decentralized supply of luggage to be used to transport a foster child's personal belongings, develop procedures for the storage and distribution of luggage to ensure the maximum number of children are able to use the luggage, and require the department to provide luggage to children who are being removed from their home or changing placement; and

WHEREAS, organizations such as Geaux 4 Kids partners with law enforcement and state departments to provide not only quality luggage bags for children, but each bag also includes essential clothing, toiletries, and comfort items that provide dignity and hope for

both the child and foster parents as they embark upon their new journey together; and

WHEREAS, providing a child with luggage instead of a trash bag when they are being taken from their home could improve that child's self-worth and hope for the future.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby request the Department of Children and Family Services to submit a report to the legislature that includes the following information:

(1) The department's current process for providing luggage to children who are removed from their home or changing foster care placement.

(2) The number of children who were removed from their home or changed placement in the previous year.

(3) The number of children who were provided luggage by the department at the point they were removed from their home or when they changed placement in the previous year.

(4) The name of luggage distribution partners in the state that provide luggage to children in partnership with the department, including the region where the distribution partner is utilized and the number of bags provided in a calendar year.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Children and Family Services shall submit the report to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare no later than January 1, 2026.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Department of Children and Family Services.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE