

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 9

BY SENATORS DUPLESSIS, BOUDREAUX, CLOUD, HENSGENS, HODGES, JACKSON-ANDREWS, LUNEAU, MCMATH, MIGUEZ, MYERS AND PRESSLY AND REPRESENTATIVES BERAULT, BOYD, BRASS, CARRIER, CHASSION, EGAN, HEBERT, JACKSON, JORDAN, KNOX, LAFLEUR, TERRY LANDRY, LARVADAIN, LYONS, MCFARLAND, MENA, NEWELL, PHELPS, SPELL, STAGNI, TAYLOR, THOMPSON, WALTERS AND WILLARD

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To create and provide for the Task Force on Fatherhood Engagement to study how Louisiana can increase the engagement of fathers in the lives of their children, to research best practices, and develop recommendations for each state agency to promote the full inclusion of fathers and the involvement of fathers in the lives of their children.

WHEREAS, Louisiana ranks forty-ninth out of the fifty states for its percentage of out-of-wedlock births and single mother households; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana ranks forty-fifth on Wallet Hub's "Best States for Working Dads" list; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana ranks forty-ninth on a recent analysis of Child and Family Service Reviews for engaging fathers in case planning in child welfare; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana has the highest male incarceration rate of any state in the nation; and

WHEREAS, numerous research studies have shown that the involvement of fathers in the lives of their children beginning during the prenatal period contributes to improved social, emotional, cognitive, and language development, self-esteem, positive behavior, mental health, physical health, and overall well-being among their children; and

WHEREAS, research has also linked fathers' involvement with their children to

improved health and well-being among both fathers and mothers and stronger relationship outcomes among parenting couples; and

WHEREAS, numerous state legislatures have prioritized supporting fatherhood involvement and engagement as an important strategy to improve outcomes across family and child-focused systems in their state; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana has an opportunity to strengthen the engagement of fathers across its health, child care, education, workforce, public safety, and child welfare systems.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby establish and provide for the Task Force on Fatherhood Engagement to research best practices and develop recommendations for each state agency to promote the full inclusion of fathers and the involvement of fathers in the lives of their children and to report its findings and recommendations by written report to the legislature and to the David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library as required by R.S. 24:771 and 772, no later than February 28, 2026.

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

- (1) The director of early childhood systems in the office of the governor.
- (2) The executive director of the Louisiana Children's Cabinet, or her designee.
- (3) The secretary of the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services, or his designee.
- (4) The superintendent of the Louisiana Department of Education, or his designee.
- (5) The secretary of the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections, or his designee.
- (6) The director of the bureau of family health within the Louisiana Department of Health, or her designee.
- (7) The director of the Louisiana Head Start Collaboration.
- (8) A representative from Fathers on a Mission as a fatherhood-focused non-profit based in the Baton Rouge area.
- (9) A representative from Dad-A-Port as a fatherhood program that focuses on fathers who are formerly incarcerated.

(10) A representative from Fathers Matter NOLA as a fatherhood-focused program in the New Orleans area.

(11) A representative of the steering committee of the Geaux Far Louisiana Coalition.

(12) The chief executive officer of the Louisiana Policy Institute for Children, or her designee.

(13) The executive director of the Louisiana Partnership for Children and Families, or her designee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each designating authority shall submit the names of designees to the task force to the director of early childhood systems in the office of the governor no later than July 31, 2025.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the task force shall convene for its first meeting no later than August 31, 2025, at the call of the director of early childhood systems in the office of the governor, and at the first meeting, the members shall elect a chairman and other officers as the task force may deem appropriate.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a draft report with preliminary recommendations shall be generated and reviewed at a meeting of the task force by January 31, 2026, and a final report with recommendations shall be generated and approved by the task force by February 28, 2026.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force meetings may be conducted in person or virtually using a secure web-based platform as authorized by law.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the duties of the task force shall include but not be limited to all of the following:

(1) Research and recommend best practices that would recognize and promote fathers' contributions to improving societal outcomes for children and families in Louisiana.

(2) Research and develop plans for how each state agency can promote the involvement of fathers in the lives of their children, including but not limited to the Department of Children and Family Services, the Department of Education, the Louisiana Department of Health, and the Department of Public Safety and Corrections.

(3) Research and develop programs and entities that foster the following:

(a) Workforce development programs that assist fathers in preparing for, finding and securing employment.

(b) Parenting through skills-based educational programs that foster quality co-parenting relationships.

(c) Development of conflict resolution skills training.

(4) Propose changes to statutes, regulations, administrative rules, and policies that impede the development or implementation of greater father involvement measures or that will enhance the prospect of success of those measures.

(5) Identify additional sources of funding, including non-governmental sources, to support programs that directly support fathers and responsible fatherhood.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall be empowered to request and collect relevant data and information necessary to fulfill its purposes from state agencies and community-based organizations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force may, to the extent feasible, request such information and data at no cost.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall incorporate the findings from the study of other states' fatherhood initiatives in its comprehensive report of findings and policy recommendations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that staff support for the task force meetings shall be provided by an agreed upon nongovernmental entity in coordination with the director of early childhood systems in the office of the governor with no cost of administration being borne by the state.

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 expenses reimbursement to which they may be individually entitled as members of their constituent organizations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall terminate on the date of the submission of its report or February 28, 2026, whichever occurs first.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the director of early childhood systems in the office of the governor, the executive director of the Louisiana Children's Cabinet, the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services, the superintendent of the Louisiana Department of Education, the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections, the director of the bureau of family health within the Louisiana Department of Health, the director of the Louisiana Head Start Collaboration, the executive director of Fathers on a Mission, the founder of the Dad-A-Port fatherhood program, the co-founders of Fathers Matter NOLA, the co-chairs of the Geaux Far Louisiana Coalition, the chief executive officer of the Louisiana Policy Institute for Children, and the executive director of the Louisiana Partnership for Children and Families.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES