

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 237

BY REPRESENTATIVE WALTERS

HEALTH SERVICES: Creates the Lupus Commission

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S. 36:259(B)(23) and R.S. 40:1122.11, relative to the creation of the Lupus  
3 Commission within the Louisiana Department of Health; to provide for the  
4 membership of the commission; to provide for the functions of the commission; to  
5 provide for the organization of the commission; to require an annual report; and to  
6 provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. R.S. 36:259(B)(23) is hereby enacted to read as follows:

9 §259. Transfer of agencies and functions to Louisiana Department of Health

10 \* \* \*

11 B. The following agencies are placed within the Louisiana Department of  
12 Health and shall exercise and perform their powers, duties, functions, and  
13 responsibilities as otherwise provided by law:

14 \* \* \*

15 (23) Lupus Commission (R.S. 40:1122.11).

16 \* \* \*

17 Section 2. R.S. 40:1122.11 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

18 §1122.11. Lupus Commission

19 A. There is hereby established within the Louisiana Department of Health,  
20 office on women's health and community health, the Lupus Commission.

- 1           B. The commission shall be comprised of the following members:
- 2           (1) One member from the Louisiana State Nurses Association.
- 3           (2) One member from the Louisiana Primary Care Association.
- 4           (3) One member from the Xavier Ochsner College of Medicine.
- 5           (4) One member from the Southern University and Agricultural and  
6 Mechanical College School of Nursing.
- 7           (5) One member from the Tulane University School of Public Health and  
8 Tropical Medicine.
- 9           (6) One member from the Our Lady of the Lake Health System.
- 10          (7) One member from the Louisiana Hospital Association.
- 11          (8) Five members who are individuals living with lupus.
- 12          (9) One member from the Louisiana House of Representatives.
- 13          (10) One member from the Louisiana Senate.
- 14          (11) One member who is the executive director of the governor's office on  
15 women's policy.
- 16          (12) One member from the Ochsner Health System.
- 17          (13) One member from Woman's Hospital of Baton Rouge.
- 18          C.(1) The members listed in Paragraphs (B)(1) through (B)(7) of this Section  
19 shall be appointed by the governor from a list of qualified candidates nominated by  
20 the respective organizations.
- 21          (2) The members listed in Paragraph (B)(8) of this Section shall be appointed  
22 by the governor from a list of self-identified individuals interested in serving on the  
23 commission.
- 24          (3) The members listed in Paragraphs (B)(9) and (B)(10) of this Section shall  
25 be appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives and the president of the  
26 Senate, respectively.
- 27          (4) The member listed in Paragraph (B)(12) of this Section shall be selected  
28 by the Ochsner Health System.

1           (5) The member listed in Paragraph (B)(13) of this Section shall be selected  
2           by the president of Woman's Hospital of Baton Rouge.

3           D. Each member shall serve at the pleasure of the appointing authority.

4           E.(1) The commission shall adopt rules and regulations to provide for the  
5           governance of the commission. Such rules and regulations shall include but not be  
6           limited to procedures and grounds for the removal of any commission member.

7           (2) The term of an appointee is four years.

8           (3) Procedures for filling a vacancy created by the removal, resignation, or  
9           death of any commission member prior to the end of the commission member's term  
10          shall follow those used for initial appointments.

11          F. Each commission member shall serve without compensation. Legislators  
12          shall receive the same per diem and travel reimbursement for attending a meeting of  
13          the commission as is normally provided for members of the legislature.  
14          Nonlegislative commission members may receive reimbursement for expenses in  
15          accordance with the guidelines of the entity they represent.

16          G. The chairman shall be elected by the commission for a term to be  
17          determined by the commission.

18          H. The domicile of the commission is Baton Rouge.

19          I. The commission shall hold quarterly public meetings unless decided by  
20          a vote of the commission or by order of the chairman.

21          J. The number of commission members necessary to constitute a quorum for  
22          the transaction of business shall be one half of the entire membership of the  
23          commission. A majority vote of the commission members constituting a quorum is  
24          necessary for any action taken by the commission.

25          K. The Louisiana Department of Health shall provide administrative  
26          assistance and serve as staff for the commission.

27          L. The functions of the commission are to:

28          (1) Evaluate functions and activities of existing groups focused on lupus to  
29          collaborate with and engage stakeholders.

- 1           (2) Support and contextualize reporting on lupus.
- 2           (3) Serve as an advisory body to the governor and the Louisiana Department  
3           of Health on matters relating to lupus treatment and care.
- 4           (4) Research and review all state regulations, guidelines, policies, and  
5           procedures relative to the treatment and care of individuals with lupus and, when  
6           appropriate, make recommendations to the governor, the secretary of the Louisiana  
7           Department of Health, and the legislature.
- 8           (5) Provide a forum for an annual public hearing on matters relating to lupus  
9           and related conditions and provide for other public comment and peer review on  
10          federal and state-funded programs related to lupus.
- 11          (6) Make recommendations on policy to ensure that the state establishes  
12          public health monitoring, advances research, and provides novel treatments for those  
13          diagnosed with lupus.
- 14          M. The commission shall submit an annual written report to the Senate and  
15          House committees on health and welfare at least sixty days prior to each regular  
16          session. The commission shall include in its report a summary of the data relevant  
17          to the functions set forth in Subsection L of this Section.

---

#### 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)]

---

HB 237 Original

2026 Regular Session

Walters

**Abstract:** Creates the Lupus Commission.

Proposed law establishes the 17-member Lupus Commission.

Proposed law provides that all members except the member from the House of Representatives, the member from the Senate, the member from Ochsner Health System, the executive director of the governor's office on women's policy, and Women's Hospital of Baton Rouge shall be appointed by the governor.

Proposed law provides that each member shall serve at the pleasure of the appointing authority.

Proposed law states that the commission shall adopt rules and regulations to provide for the governance of the commission.

Proposed law establishes that the term of each member is four years.

Proposed law provides that the members of the commission serve without compensation except that legislative members receive per diem and travel reimbursements customary for attending a meeting, and nonlegislative members may receive reimbursement for expenses in accordance with the guidelines of the entity they represent.

Proposed law states that the chairman is elected by the members for a term to be determined by the members.

Proposed law provides that the domicile of the commission is Baton Rouge.

Proposed law states that the commission shall meet quarterly unless the commission, by a majority vote of the members or by order of the chairman, decides on a different schedule for meetings.

Proposed law provides that half of the members constitutes a quorum.

Proposed law provides that the La. Dept. of Health shall provide administrative staff to and serve as staff for the commission.

Proposed law states that the purpose of the commission is to collaborate with and support stakeholders to provide education and awareness of lupus and recommend policies to treat and care for individuals with lupus.

Proposed law directs the commission to submit an annual written report to the Senate and House committees on health and welfare at least 60 days prior to each regular session.

(Adds R.S. 36:259(B)(23) and R.S. 40:1122.11)