

SENATE BILL NO. 435

BY SENATORS MYERS, BARROW, BOUDREAUX, CATHEY, CONNICK, DUPLESSIS, HENRY, MIZELL, MORRIS, PRICE, SELDERS AND TALBOT AND REPRESENTATIVES BEAULLIEU, BILLINGS, BOYD, CHASSION, FARNUM, KNOX, LARVADAIN, LYONS, MARCELLE, THOMAS, WALTERS AND WYBLE

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AN ACT

To enact Subpart C of Part II of Chapter 3 of Title 46 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be comprised of R.S. 46:261, relative to the Louisiana Commission on Fatherhood Engagement; to establish the commission within the office of the governor; to provide for the membership, powers, and duties of the commission; to provide for interagency cooperation; to provide for a termination date; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. Subpart C of Part II of Chapter 3 of Title 46 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, comprised of R.S. 46:261, is hereby enacted to read as follows:

**SUBPART C. FATHERHOOD ENGAGEMENT**

§261. Louisiana Commission on Fatherhood Engagement

A. There is hereby established within the office of the governor, the Louisiana Commission on Fatherhood Engagement, hereafter referred to as the "commission".

1 B. The commission shall be comprised of the following members:

2 (1) The director of early childhood systems in the office of the governor.

3 (2) The executive director of the Louisiana Children's Cabinet, or his  
4 designee.

5 (3) The secretary of the Louisiana Department of Children and Family  
6 Services, or his designee.

7 (4) The superintendent of the Louisiana Department of Education, or his  
8 designee.

9 (5) The secretary of the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and  
10 Corrections, or his designee.

11 (6) The director of the bureau of family health within the Louisiana  
12 Department of Health, or his designee.

13 (7) The secretary of Louisiana Works, or his designee.

14 (8) A member of the Senate appointed by the president of the Senate.

15 (9) A member of the House of Representatives appointed by the speaker of  
16 the House of Representatives.

17 (10) A representative from the Louisiana Supreme Court.

18 (11) The director of the Louisiana Head Start Collaboration.

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

21 (13) A family court judge appointed by the governor.

22 (14) A representative of a faith community that promotes fatherhood  
23 engagement appointed by the governor.

24 (15) A representative from a parenting education organization that works in  
25 multiple parishes appointed by the governor.

26 (16) One representative each from an organization that provides fatherhood  
27 programs in each of the nine public health regions of the state. If there is no  
28 organization that provides fatherhood programs in any region, this position shall be  
29 filled by a father who is a community leader or an additional faith-based  
30 representative appointed by the governor.

1 C. A majority of the members of the commission shall constitute a quorum  
2 for the transaction of business, and all official action of the commission shall require  
3 the favorable vote of a majority of those members present and voting.

4 D. Members appointed to the commission shall serve two-year terms. The  
5 directors, secretaries, and superintendents, or their designees shall serve on the  
6 commission until they cease to be a director, secretary, or superintendent. Each  
7 member shall serve on the commission from the date of appointment until the end  
8 of the term for which the member was appointed. Members may be reappointed.

9 E. Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointments.  
10 Any member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring prior to the expiration date of the  
11 term for which the member's predecessor was appointed shall serve on the  
12 commission for the remainder of that term. A member shall continue to serve on the  
13 commission subsequent to the expiration date of the member's term until the  
14 member's successor is appointed.

15 F. Members shall serve without compensation but shall be eligible for  
16 reimbursement for necessary expenses.

17 **G.(1) The director of early childhood systems in the office of the**  
18 **governor shall call the first meeting of the commission.**

19 **(2) The commission shall elect a chairperson from among its members**  
20 **in every even-numbered year.**

21 **H. The duties of the commission shall include but not be limited to all of**  
22 **the following:**

23 **(1) Implementing the recommendations made by the Task Force on**  
24 **Fatherhood Engagement and all ensuing recommendations developed and**  
25 **approved by the commission pursuant to Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 9**  
26 **of the 2025 Regular Session of the Legislature.**

27 **(2) Raising awareness of the importance of fathers' engagement in the**  
28 **lives of their children, resources and support available to Louisiana fathers, and**  
29 **the challenges and barriers facing Louisiana fathers.**

30 **(3) Identifying resources available to fund fatherhood-related programs**

1 **and assist in the creation or expansion of initiatives that do the following:**

2 **(a) Promote responsible fatherhood.**

3 **(b) Build the parenting and co-parenting skills of fathers.**

4 **(c) Provide employment-related services for low-income fathers.**

5 **(d) Provide services to fathers who are incarcerated or have been**  
6 **recently released from incarceration to allow them to maintain or reestablish**  
7 **their relationships with their families.**

8 **(e) Reconcile fathers with their families.**

9 **(f) Provide support for effective fatherhood programming across state**  
10 **agencies.**

11 **(g) Improve data collection and usage on fathers and fatherhood**  
12 **engagement across agencies.**

13 **(h) Improve support for fathers during the perinatal period.**

14 **(i) Assist fathers with minor children in addressing barriers to accessing**  
15 **and maintaining stable housing.**

16 **(j) Improve policies and practices to ensure fair and equal opportunities**  
17 **for fathers in child custody, visitation, and family court proceedings.**

18 **(k) Increase public awareness of the critical role fathers play.**

19 **(4) Organizing a state summit on fatherhood at least once every four**  
20 **years.**

21 **(5) Reporting annually on the commission's expectations for the**  
22 **outcomes of fatherhood-related programs and initiatives and the methods the**  
23 **commission uses for conducting annual measures of those outcomes.**

24 **(6) Submitting a comprehensive report to the legislature annually with**  
25 **a funding request for fatherhood programs that are overseen by the commission**  
26 **and allocated to community organizations to support programs and services**  
27 **aligned with the commission's intent and purpose.**

28 **I. The provisions of this Section shall terminate on January 1, 2030.**

29 Section 2. Subpart C of Part II of Chapter 3 of Title 46 of the Louisiana Revised  
30 Statutes of 1950, comprised of R.S. 46:261, is hereby repealed in its entirety.

1           Section 3.(A) This Section and Section 1 of this Act shall become effective August 1,  
2           2026.  
3           (B) Section 2 of this Act shall become effective January 1, 2030.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_