

Regular Session, 2014

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 69

BY SENATOR MORRISH

CHILDREN. Creates the "Erin's Law" task force.

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To create the Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children within the Department of Children and Family Services.

WHEREAS, according to the Rape Abuse and Incest National Network, forty-four percent of sexual assault and rape victims are under the age of eighteen and fifteen percent are under the age of twelve; and

WHEREAS, girls ages sixteen to nineteen are four times more likely than the general population to be victims of rape, attempted rape, or sexual assault; and

WHEREAS, ninety-three percent of juvenile sexual assault victims know their attacker, of which thirty-four percent of those attackers were family members; and

WHEREAS, one of these victims who was sexually abused by a neighbor and family member was Erin Merryn of Illinois; and

WHEREAS, Erin was sexually abused for six and a half years by a neighbor and a family member; and

WHEREAS, Erin began a crusade her senior year of high school in 2004 to end the silence and shame around sexual abuse; and

WHEREAS, Erin was instrumental in passing a law in her home state of Illinois to address sexual abuse of children known as "Erin's Law"; and

1           WHEREAS, Erin has promoted child sexual abuse awareness throughout the United  
2 States, as well as establishing "Erin's Law" in other states; and

3           WHEREAS, establishing a Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse of  
4 Children has been an essential first step to enacting Erin's Law in other states.

5           THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby  
6 create the Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children within the Department  
7 of Children and Family Services. The task force shall consist of all of the following:

- 8           (1)   Two members of the Senate appointed by the president of the Senate.
- 9           (2)   Two members of the House of Representatives appointed by the speaker of  
10               the House of Representatives.
- 11          (3)   The secretary of the Department of Children and Family Services or his  
12               designee.
- 13          (4)   The state Superintendent of Education or his designee.
- 14          (5)   The secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals or his designee.
- 15          (6)   The executive director of the Louisiana Violence Prevention Authority or his  
16               designee.
- 17          (7)   One representative of an agency that leads the collaboration of the  
18               investigation, prosecution, and treatment of child sexual and physical abuse  
19               cases, appointed by the secretary of the Department of Children and Family  
20               Services.
- 21          (8)   One representative of an organization representing law enforcement,  
22               appointed by the superintendent of State Police.
- 23          (9)   One representative of a statewide professional teachers' organization,  
24               appointed by the head of the Louisiana Association of Educators.
- 25          (10)   One representative of a different statewide professional teachers'  
26               organization, appointed by the head of the Louisiana Federation of Teachers.
- 27          (11)   One representative of an organization involved in the prevention of child  
28               abuse in the state, appointed by the secretary of the Department of Children  
29               and Family Services.
- 30          (12)   One representative of an organization representing school management in

1                   this state, appointed by the head of the Louisiana Association of School  
2                   Board Executives.

3           (13)   Two members of the public appointed by the president of the Senate.

4           (14)   Two members of the public appointed by the speaker of the House of  
5                   Representatives.

6           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that members of the task force should be individuals  
7           who are actively involved in the fields of the prevention of child abuse and neglect and child  
8           welfare. The appointment of members should reflect the geographic and racial diversity of  
9           the state.

10          BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall elect a presiding officer by  
11          a majority vote of the membership of the task force. The task force shall meet at the call of  
12          the presiding officer.

13          BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall make recommendations for  
14          reducing child abuse in Louisiana. In making those recommendations, the task force shall:

15               (1) Gather information concerning child sexual abuse throughout the state.

16               (2) Receive reports and testimony from individuals, state and local agencies,  
17               community-based organizations, and other public and private organizations.

18               (3) Create goals for state policy that would prevent child sexual abuse.

19               (4) Submit a final report with its recommendations to the legislature by January 1,  
20          2016.

21          BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the recommendations may include proposals for  
22          specific statutory changes and methods to foster cooperation among state agencies and  
23          between the state and local government.

24          BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall consult with employees of  
25          the Department of Children and Family Services, Department of Justice, the office of state  
26          police, the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Department of  
27          Education, and any other state agency or department as necessary to accomplish the task  
28          force's responsibilities.

29          BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the task force shall serve  
30          without compensation, except per diem or expense reimbursement to which they may be

1 individually entitled as members of the constituent organizations.

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall be abolished upon  
3 submission of the report to the legislature on January 1, 2016.

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

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The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part  
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Alan Miller.

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DIGEST

Morrish

SCR No. 69

Creates the Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children within the Dept. of  
Children and Family Services (DCFS).

The Task Force shall consist of all of the following:

- (1) Two members of the Senate appointed by the president of the Senate.
- (2) Two members of the House of Representatives appointed by the speaker of the  
House of Representatives.
- (3) The secretary of the Dept. of Children and Family Services or his designee.
- (4) The superintendent of Education or his designee.
- (5) The secretary of the Dept. of Health and Hospitals or his designee.
- (6) The executive director of the Louisiana Violence Prevention Authority or his  
designee.
- (7) One representative of an agency that leads the collaboration of the investigation,  
prosecution, and treatment of child sexual and physical abuse cases, appointed by the  
secretary of DCFS.
- (8) One representative of an organization representing law enforcement, appointed by  
the superintendent of State Police.
- (9) One representative of a statewide professional teachers' organization, appointed by  
the head of the Louisiana Association of Educators.
- (10) One representative of a different statewide professional teachers' organization,  
appointed by the head of the Louisiana Federation of Teachers.
- (11) One representative of an organization involved in the prevention of child abuse,  
appointed by the secretary of DCFS.
- (12) One representative of an organization representing school management, appointed  
by the head of the Louisiana Association of School Board Executives.
- (13) Two members of the public appointed by the president of the Senate.
- (14) Two members of the public appointed by the speaker of the House of  
Representatives.

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 the constituent organizations.

The Task Force shall be abolished upon submission of its report with recommendations to the legislature on January 1, 2016.