

Regular Session, 2014

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 135

BY REPRESENTATIVE SMITH

CORRECTIONS/PRISONERS: Requests the Department of Public Safety and Corrections to establish partnerships with area universities to provide additional access to individual therapy and drug treatment for inmates at the Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the Department of Public Safety and Corrections to establish
3 partnerships with universities in the state of Louisiana in order to provide access to
4 individual therapy and drug treatment for inmates at the Louisiana Correctional
5 Institute for Women.

6 WHEREAS, the Louisiana Women's and Policy Research Commission (commission)
7 is the state commission charged with monitoring the status of Louisiana women for the
8 purposes of evaluating their economic, educational, and health issues, analyzing trends that
9 impact women's health and prosperity, and providing policy recommendations to address the
10 challenges women in our state face; and

11 WHEREAS, Act No. 668 of the 2003 Regular Session of the Legislature requires the
12 Louisiana Women's Policy and Research Commission to submit detailed annual reports to
13 the governor on each subject which it is monitoring; and

14 WHEREAS, the Louisiana Women's Policy and Research Commission's 2013 Report
15 to the Governor (report) focused on four main areas including women's health; gender-based
16 violence; women, education and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math; and women
17 and economic concerns; and

18 WHEREAS, the report also included a special trends section focusing on incarcerated
19 women in the state as female incarceration impacts health, safety, and the well-being of
20 many women and communities throughout Louisiana; and

1 WHEREAS, the special trends section of the report reveals that Louisiana's rate of
2 incarceration in 2012 was eight hundred and ninety-three per one hundred thousand people,
3 a rate which is twenty percent higher than any other state; and

4 WHEREAS, members of the commission visited the Louisiana Correctional Institute
5 for Women (LCIW), the only female correctional facility operating at the state level, and
6 made it the focus of their research on Louisiana incarcerated women's issues; and

7 WHEREAS, the report reveals that of the average one thousand and eighty women
8 incarcerated at LCIW in Fiscal Year 2013, forty-four percent were listed as being on
9 psychiatric medication, seventy-seven percent were categorized as suffering from severe
10 mental illnesses, and seventy-eight percent were categorized as having an addiction disorder;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, the report states that the high number of people with mental health and
13 substance abuse disorders in the justice system is expensive, and that individuals with these
14 behavior health issues have high recidivism rates; and

15 WHEREAS, the Steve Hoyle Intensive Substance Abuse Treatment Program, the
16 state's drug treatment program, located at the Bossier Parish Prison, only reserves twenty-
17 five positions for incarcerated women; and

18 WHEREAS, the LCIW offers support groups and makes quality healthcare available
19 to many inmates who may never have had adequate access to health care prior to their
20 incarceration; however, LCIW does not have the resources to offer individual drug treatment
21 to inmates; and

22 WHEREAS, a number of universities in the state of Louisiana offer degrees in social
23 work, psychiatry, and psychology and are in a unique position to offer their guidance or
24 assistance to those incarcerated at LCIW.

25 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
26 urge and request that the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections explore and
27 establish partnerships with universities within the state to provide additional access to
28 individual therapy and drug treatment for inmates at the Louisiana Correctional Institute for
29 Women.

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the
2 secretary of the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections and the president
3 of each university in the state of Louisiana.

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)]

Smith

HCR No. 135

Urges and requests that the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections explore and establish partnerships with universities within the state to provide additional access to individual therapy and drug treatment for inmates at the Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women.