Regular Session, 2014

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 204

BY REPRESENTATIVES SMITH, BARROW, AND ST. GERMAIN

CORRECTIONS: Requests the Department of Public Safety and Corrections to align its job training programs across all prison systems to high-demand, high-wage jobs in a gender-neutral manner to assist women in attaining such jobs upon release

1   A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2   To urge and request the Department of Public Safety and Corrections to align its job training

3   programs across all prison systems to high-demand, high-wage jobs in a gender-

4   neutral manner to assist women in attaining such jobs upon release.

5   WHEREAS, the Louisiana Women's Policy and Research Commission, pursuant to

6   R.S. 46:2525, has submitted to the governor its annual report; and

7   WHEREAS, the commission's 2013 report to the governor addresses the

8   commission's duties: monitoring the status of Louisiana women for the purpose of evaluating

9   their economic, educational, and health concerns, needs, and hardships; identifying and

10   analyzing trends that impact the health and prosperity of Louisiana women; and advising the

11   governor on particular hardships, concerns, and needs that challenge Louisiana women and

12   their possible solutions; and

13   WHEREAS, multimillion dollar companies are expected to relocate to Louisiana and

14   have an urgent need for skilled workers in high-need, high-wage jobs that focus on science,

15   technology, engineering, and math, which have been traditionally more male-dominated

16   fields; and

17   WHEREAS, one aspect of the commission's report focuses on efforts underway in

18   Louisiana to increase the number of Louisiana women entering "Women, Education and

19   Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math" (STEM) career fields, in which the gender

20   wage gap tends to be narrower and the wages higher than in other fields; and

1 WHEREAS, per capita, Louisiana has the highest rate of incarceration of all of the

2 states of the union; and

3 WHEREAS, according to the commission, most women incarcerated in Louisiana

4 are in prison for nonviolent, poverty-related property and drug crimes; and

5 WHEREAS, in order to lower female recidivism rates, it is therefore crucial that

6 women be provided with opportunities to receive adequate job training in industries where

7 they can earn a living wage upon release; and

8 WHEREAS, at present, women prisoners at Louisiana Correctional Institute for

9 Women are only offered training in culinary arts and upholstery, while male inmates in the

10 Louisiana prison system have the option to receive training in more lucrative, high-demand

11 craft occupations that can help them successfully support themselves and their families upon

12 release; and

13 WHEREAS, the commission respectfully recommends that the Department of Public

14 Safety and Corrections align all of its job training across the prison system to high-demand,

15 high-wage jobs in a gender-neutral manner to help women attain jobs upon release that offer

16 them financial independence and reduce their likelihood of reoffending.

17 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby

18 urge and request the Department of Public Safety and Corrections to align its job training

19 programs across all prison systems to high-demand, high-wage jobs in a gender-neutral

20 manner to assist women in attaining such jobs upon release.

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the

22 Department of Public Safety and Corrections.

DIGEST

Smith   HCR No. 204

Urges and requests the Dept. of Public Safety and Corrections to align its job training programs across all prison systems to high-demand, high-wage jobs in a gender-neutral manner to assist women in attaining such jobs upon release.