

2015 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 174

BY REPRESENTATIVE MORENO

EDUCATION: Requests that the State Bd. of Elementary and Secondary Education identify funding sources for early childhood care and education and submit a report relative to the implementation of its funding model for early childhood care and education

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in consultation
3 with stakeholders which include but are not limited to the Advisory Council on Early
4 Care and Education, to identify sources of state and federal funds available in
5 Louisiana for early childhood care and education, as well as additional potential
6 funding sources used by other states for such purpose, and submit to the House
7 Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education a written proposal
8 of funding mechanisms and a corresponding strategy for implementation of the
9 eighty million dollar funding model developed in response to House Concurrent
10 Resolution No. 61 of the 2014 Regular Session of the Legislature.

11 WHEREAS, the legislature passed Act No. 3 of the 2012 Regular Session of the
12 Legislature (Act 3), which requires the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education
13 (BESE) to create a comprehensive and integrated network through which to manage and
14 oversee all programs funded through state or federal resources that provide early childhood
15 care or educational services; and

16 WHEREAS, the legislature expressed its intent that a comprehensive and integrated
17 delivery system for early childhood care and education be created to ensure that every child
18 enters kindergarten healthy and ready to learn; and

19 WHEREAS, BESE, the state Department of Education, and the Department of
20 Children and Family Services have worked diligently and collaboratively to implement the
21 provisions of Act 3, including the integration of standards and expectations across publicly

1 funded early childhood care and education programs and the support of regional pilot
2 programs; and

3 WHEREAS, the implementation of Act 3 has appropriately focused on increasing
4 the quality of care and education, preparing children for kindergarten, and honoring family
5 choices; and

6 WHEREAS, it is imperative that all publicly funded early childhood care and
7 education programs offer high quality care and education to families, providing a safe,
8 nurturing environment for children and preparing all children for kindergarten; and

9 WHEREAS, the quality of care and education is determined, in large part, by the
10 ability of early learning centers to employ capable individuals as caregivers and teachers;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, publicly funded early childhood care and education programs in
13 Louisiana are not currently funded equitably, contributing to the inability of some early
14 learning centers and programs to meet the state's quality standards and its expectation that
15 children will be ready for kindergarten; and

16 WHEREAS, fewer than thirty percent of at-risk children ages birth to four in
17 Louisiana have access to a publicly funded early childhood care and education program; and

18 WHEREAS, Louisiana currently appropriates no state general fund money and no
19 Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) money to early care and education
20 services for children under age four; and

21 WHEREAS, the state should make every reasonable attempt to equitably fund family
22 choices to the fullest extent possible and to offer high quality options as families select
23 publicly funded early childhood care and education; and

24 WHEREAS, HCR No. 61 of the 2014 Regular Session of the Legislature requested
25 BESE to develop a statewide model for the funding of and equitable distribution of public
26 funds for quality early childhood care and education for Louisiana children, ages birth to
27 five, whose families request such services, and to submit a written report relative to such
28 model to the legislature prior to the 2015 Regular Session; in response to this Resolution,
29 BESE developed a funding model that was presented to the legislature in a report to the
30 House and Senate education committees (the report); and

1 WHEREAS, the report defined three major challenges in the implementation of Act
2 3, including upgrading quality as child care funding is too low to ensure adequate teaching,
3 creating equity as the state investment in Pre-K is less than the state investment in
4 kindergarten, and increasing access as there are not enough Pre-K seats for all at-risk
5 families who want one; and

6 WHEREAS, the report estimated the cost of addressing these challenges to be eighty
7 million dollars; however, the report did not define specific funding mechanisms nor how this
8 funding might be phased in; and

9 WHEREAS, there is an urgent need to address the early childhood care and
10 education funding gaps in the state, as the full implementation of Act 3 is mandated to begin
11 in the 2015-2016 school year, and only fifty-four percent of children in Louisiana who are
12 entering kindergarten are considered ready for kindergarten.

13 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
14 urge and request the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in consultation
15 with stakeholders, which include but are not limited to the Advisory Council on Early Care
16 and Education, to identify funding sources of state and federal funds available in Louisiana
17 to be used for early childhood care and education, as well as additional potential funding
18 sources used by other states for such purpose, and submit a written report to the House
19 Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education.

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that such report, which BESE shall submit to these
21 committees by January 15, 2016, shall include a proposal of specific funding mechanisms
22 and a corresponding strategy for implementation of the eighty million dollar funding model
23 developed in response to House Concurrent Resolution No. 61 of the 2014 Regular Session
24 of the Legislature.

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted
26 to the president of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the state
27 superintendent of education.

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)]

HCR 174 Engrossed

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Requests that the State Bd. of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE), in consultation with stakeholders, identify sources of state and federal funds available in La. for early childhood care and education, as well as additional potential funding sources used by other states for this purpose, and submit a written report to the House and Senate Education committees by Jan. 15, 2016, which includes a proposal of specific funding mechanisms and a corresponding strategy for implementation of the funding model developed in response HCR No. 61 of the 2014 R.S.