

2015 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 134

BY REPRESENTATIVE LOPINTO

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To create the Criminal Justice Funding Commission to study and make recommendations to the legislature for the development of a more unified, stable, and statewide funding structure for the fair, efficient, and effective administration of the criminal justice system.

WHEREAS, the existence of a fair, efficient, and equitable criminal justice system is essential to the administration of justice; and

WHEREAS, adequate financial resources for the work of all components of the criminal justice system, including the courts, law enforcement, prosecution, public defense counsel, and corrections is integral to a properly functioning criminal justice system; and

WHEREAS, no component of the criminal justice system can function effectively without reasonable resources; and

WHEREAS, the membership of the Louisiana State Bar Association has previously adopted resolutions in 2007, 2010, 2011, and 2013 aimed at adequately funding Louisiana's criminal justice system by seeking to address multiple issues within that system; and

WHEREAS, each year the Louisiana State Bar Association Criminal Justice Committee convenes a statewide summit to identify issues of shared concern for the entire criminal justice system and to build consensus around actionable solutions to those issues; and

WHEREAS, in the 2014 summit, criminal justice leaders from across the state explored the issue of strategic funding reform for Louisiana's criminal justice system and found that current methods of funding many components of the criminal justice system result in unpredictable revenue streams, underfunded budgets, and severe restrictions of essential services; and

WHEREAS, participants in the 2014 summit recommended that in order to resolve unpredictability, inadequacy, and inefficiency of funding for essential components for the criminal justice system, the Legislature of Louisiana should request a study of the possibility of instituting a statewide general fund for criminal justice agencies; and

WHEREAS, it is incumbent upon this state to develop and implement the changes necessary to optimize public safety resources and make strategic investments across our public safety system; and

WHEREAS, holding public safety paramount and considering the issues that impact diverse stakeholders of the criminal justice system, this legislature is dedicated to making a comprehensive set of reforms that yield a more fair and effective criminal justice system; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature of Louisiana has the power to authorize and direct the study of and make recommendations for the revision of laws impacting our criminal justice agencies.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby establish the Criminal Justice Funding Commission to study and make recommendations to the legislature for the development of a more unified, stable, and statewide funding structure for the fair, efficient, and effective administration of the criminal justice system.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall be comprised of the following members:

(1) One member of the Senate appointed by the president of the Senate, or the member's designee, who shall serve as co-chairperson of the commission.

(2) One member of the House of Representatives appointed by the speaker of the House, or the member's designee, who shall serve as co-chairperson of the commission.

(3) A district attorney appointed by the Louisiana District Attorneys Association, or his designee.

(4) A public defender appointed by the Louisiana Public Defender Board, or his designee.

(5) A person selected by the secretary of the Department of Public Safety and Corrections, or his designee.

- (6) A person selected by the Louisiana Clerks of Court Association, or his designee.
- (7) The legislative auditor, or his designee.
- (8) A member of the Louisiana Sentencing Commission to be selected by the chairman of the Louisiana Sentencing Commission, or his designee.
- (9) A person appointed by the chief justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court, or his designee.
- (10) A sheriff appointed by the Louisiana Sheriffs' Association, or his designee.
- (11) The superintendent of state police, or his designee.
- (12) A person appointed by the governor, or his designee.
- (13) The president of the Louisiana State Bar Association, or his designee.
- (14) An attorney appointed by the Louisiana Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, or his designee.
- (15) A person appointed by the Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana, or his designee.
- (16) A person appointed by the Pelican Institute for Public Policy, or his designee.
- (17) A person appointed by Louisiana Budget Project, or his designee.
- (18) A person appointed by the American Civil Liberties Union of Louisiana, or his designee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in the development of these recommendations, the commission shall review how other states fund their core criminal justice functions including but not limited to law enforcement, corrections, prosecution, public defense, and the courts; how Louisiana currently funds the criminal justice system; and how Louisiana could potentially restructure its current funding scheme to implement evidence-based, best practices.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall submit its recommendations to the House and Senate committees on the administration of criminal justice, the speaker of the House of Representatives, and the president of the Senate by February 1, 2016.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the speaker of the House of Representatives and the president of the Senate.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE