

ACT No. 157

2020 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 665

BY REPRESENTATIVE CORMIER AND SENATORS BARROW AND CARTER

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact Subpart A of Part IV of Subchapter B of Chapter 5-F of Title 40 of
3 the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be comprised of R.S. 40:1289.1 through
4 1289.5, and to enact R.S. 36:259(B)(37), relative to toxic mold; to provide for a task
5 force to study the public health impacts of toxic mold in this state; to provide for the
6 composition, functions, and duties of the task force; to terminate the task force on
7 a certain date; and to provide for related matters.

8 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

9 Section 1. R.S. 36:259(B)(37) is hereby enacted to read as follows:

10 §259. Transfer of agencies and functions to Louisiana Department of Health

11 * * *

12 B. The following agencies, as defined in R.S. 36:3, are placed within the
13 Louisiana Department of Health and shall perform and exercise their powers, duties,
14 functions, and responsibilities as otherwise provided by law:

15 * * *

16 (37) The Louisiana Toxic Mold Task Force (R.S. 40:1289.1 et seq.).

17 * * *

18 Section 2. Subpart A of Part IV of Subchapter B of Chapter 5-F of Title 40 of the
19 Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, comprised of R.S. 40:1289.1 through 1289.5, is hereby
20 amended and reenacted to read as follows:

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PART IV. TOXIC SUBSTANCES

SUBPART A. TOXIC MOLD TASK FORCE

§1289.1. Legislative findings; declaration

A. The legislature hereby finds the following:

(1) Certain forms of mold pose a severe and unacceptable risk to the environment of Louisiana and the health of its people. Moreover, the legislature finds that indoor toxins, specifically toxic mold, represent an insufficiently understood health and environmental problem.

(2) ~~The legislature recognizes that numerous~~ Numerous studies indicate ~~likely that adverse~~ health effects result from mold spores, varying from cold-like symptoms to more serious symptoms, such as allergy and asthma outbreaks. ~~These toxins~~ Toxins in mold can have negative effects on humans when ingested, inhaled, or when they come in contact with the skin. These effects can have serious health consequences for some population subgroups, especially infants, children, pregnant women, persons who are elderly, ~~asthmatics~~ individuals with asthma, individuals with allergies, and individuals with compromised immune systems. Healthcare professionals now acknowledge that molds can cause allergies, trigger asthma attacks, detrimentally affect the function of vital human organs, and increase susceptibility to colds and flu.

(3) ~~The legislature further recognizes that though~~ Though not all molds are toxic, there are certain dangers that molds present within buildings and structures. It is thus imperative that the toxicity of ~~its presence~~ mold be determined where it is found and a corresponding plan of action be implemented to address ~~such~~ mold-related hazards in buildings and structures within this state.

B. The legislature hereby declares that it is in the best interest of the public health, welfare, and safety to establish a task force to lead development of comprehensive policies and promote best practices concerning mitigation and remediation of toxic mold and reducing the adverse health effects caused by this unique threat to public health.

1 §1289.2. Definition

2 For the purposes of this Subpart, the term "mold" means any form of
 3 multicellular fungi that live on plant or animal matter and in indoor environments.
 4 Types of mold include but are not limited to cladosporium, alternaria, aspergillus,
 5 trichoderma, memnoniella, mucor, and stachybotrys chartarum.

6 §1289.3. Toxic Mold Task Force; creation; composition; meetings

7 A. ~~There is hereby created~~ The legislature hereby creates within the
 8 Louisiana Department of Health the Louisiana Toxic Mold Task Force, referred to
 9 hereafter in this Subpart as the "task force", which shall be composed of fifteen the
 10 following members as follows:

11 (1) One pediatric environmental health specialist ~~selected and~~ appointed by
 12 the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health.

13 (2) One person with expertise in toxicology ~~selected and~~ appointed by the
 14 secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health.

15 (3) The assistant secretary of the office of public health of the Louisiana
 16 Department of Health or his designee.

17 (4) ~~One member designated by the office of health affairs and medical~~
 18 ~~education of the Louisiana State University System.~~ The chancellor of the Louisiana
 19 State University Health Sciences Center at New Orleans or his designee.

20 (5) The chancellor of the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center
 21 at Shreveport or his designee.

22 (6) The dean of the School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine of Tulane
 23 University or his designee.

24 (5) (7) One member ~~designated~~ appointed by the Louisiana State Medical
 25 Society.

26 (6) (8) One member ~~designated~~ appointed by the Louisiana Primary Care
 27 Association.

28 (7) (9) One member with expertise in consumer protection ~~designated~~
 29 appointed by the Louisiana attorney general.

1 ~~(8)~~ (10) One member ~~designated~~ appointed by the Southern University Law
 2 Center.

3 ~~(9)~~ (11) One member ~~designated~~ appointed by the Paul M. Hebert Law
 4 Center of Louisiana State University.

5 ~~(10)~~ (12) One member with expertise in toxic mold remediation ~~designated~~
 6 appointed by the Louisiana State Licensing Board for Contractors.

7 ~~(11)~~ (13) One member ~~designated~~ appointed by the Louisiana Housing
 8 Corporation.

9 ~~(12)~~ One member designated by the dean of the School of Public Health and
 10 Tropical Medicine of Tulane University.

11 ~~(13)~~ (14) One member ~~designated~~ appointed by the Louisiana Realtors
 12 Association.

13 ~~(14)~~ (15) One member ~~designated~~ appointed by the Louisiana Home
 14 Builders Association.

15 ~~(15)~~ (16) One member ~~designated~~ appointed by the Apartment Association
 16 of Louisiana.

17 B. The secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health shall take such
 18 actions as are necessary to ensure that the initial convening of the task force occurs
 19 no later than October 1, ~~2014~~ 2020.

20 C. The task force members shall select a chairman annually, and he shall
 21 serve as chairman without salary.

22 D. Task force members shall serve without compensation, except per diem
 23 or expense reimbursement to which they may be individually entitled by their
 24 respective employer organizations.

25 E. The task force shall hold at least two ~~regular~~ meetings each year at a place
 26 designated by the chairman.

27 §1289.4. Functions and duties of the task force; report to the governor and
 28 legislature

29 A. The functions of the task force shall include all of the following:

1 (1) Serve as an advisory body to the legislature on policies and practices that
 2 protect all people of this state, particularly tenants, consumers, and vulnerable
 3 populations, from harm related to toxic mold.

4 (2) Serve as a coordinating forum between and among state agencies, local
 5 ~~government~~ governments, and nongovernmental groups on matters related to toxic
 6 mold.

7 (3) On a regular basis, research and review state regulations, guidelines,
 8 policies, and procedures that pertain in any way to toxic mold and make
 9 recommendations to the governor, the legislature, and the secretary of the Louisiana
 10 Department of Health as deemed necessary and appropriate by the chairman of the
 11 task force.

12 B. On or before January 1, ~~2015~~ 2021, and annually thereafter, the task force
 13 shall prepare and submit to the governor and the legislature a report on the status of
 14 public health risks from toxic mold in Louisiana. The annual report shall include,
 15 without limitation, all of the following:

16 (1) An assessment, based on scientific evidence, of the nature, scope, and
 17 magnitude of the adverse environmental and health impacts caused by toxic mold in
 18 ~~the~~ this state.

19 (2) Measurement, based on scientific evidence, of the adverse health effects
 20 of exposure to molds on the general population, including specific effects on any
 21 subgroups identifiable as being at greater risk of adverse health effects when exposed
 22 to molds.

23 (3) Identification of actions taken by the state, local governments, and any
 24 other public or private organizations that have made a positive impact on mitigating
 25 the harm to public health of toxic mold.

26 (4) Identification of best practices for the control of mold in a cost-effective
 27 and environmentally sound manner.

28 C. The task force may request administrative and technical support from the
 29 Louisiana Department of Health, office of public health, to carry out the functions
 30 and responsibilities provided in this Section.

1 §1289.5. Termination

2 The provisions of this Subpart shall terminate on January 1, ~~2018~~ 2024.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: _____