

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 19

BY SENATOR BARROW

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to recommend and make publicly available standards and curricula on the subject of implicit bias in the delivery of health care for health professional education programs and health professional licensing boards.

WHEREAS, prior to and during the COVID-19 pandemic, health care professionals have been among the most valued and trusted workers in our state and nation; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana's health care workers have performed heroically and made incredible sacrifices in fulfilling their professional calling during our state's response to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, like all other persons, regardless of background, culture, or creed, health care professionals carry with them ingrained and often unconscious assumptions about the people with whom they interact; and

WHEREAS, these assumptions can manifest into a characteristic known as implicit bias; and

WHEREAS, implicit bias, which is also referred to as unconscious bias, refers to the attitudes and beliefs about other people that affect our understanding, decisions, and actions in an unconscious manner; and

WHEREAS, our attitudes and beliefs affect how we treat individuals based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, age, and appearance which can impact the provision of health care; and

WHEREAS, a growing body of evidence indicates that implicit bias in the delivery of health care leads to poor health outcomes, increases in the cost of care, and the widening of health disparities; and

WHEREAS, there are twenty-four health profession licensing boards statutorily created to regulate the profession and protect the public; and

WHEREAS, to improve the health and well-being of people, licensed health professionals must know the importance of understanding and treating the whole person; and

WHEREAS, instituting curricula and training initiatives which address implicit bias in health care will empower Louisiana's health professionals to have a positive impact on the lives of the people they treat and will improve the overall quality of health care delivered to the people of our state.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to recommend and make publicly available standards and curricula on implicit bias for the various types of licensed health professionals in this state.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request each school of medicine, nursing, and allied health in this state to compare its current training and educational curricula on implicit bias with the recommended standards and curricula published by the Louisiana Department of Health in accordance with this Resolution, and to adopt or adapt the recommended standards and curricula for its health professional education programs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request each health profession licensing board of this state to work with the Louisiana Department of Health to offer to its licensees training on implicit bias that aligns with the recommended standards and curricula published by the department in accordance with this Resolution, and to consider instituting completion of training on implicit bias as a requirement for licensure.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health, the director of boards and commissions of the office of the governor, and the commissioner of higher education.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE