

2023 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 210

BY REPRESENTATIVE KNOX

A RESOLUTION

To create a task force to study and make recommendations on the impact of certain corporation entities designated as dollar stores and to submit a written report of its findings and recommendations to the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana no later than February 1, 2024.

WHEREAS, corporate stores designated as dollar stores are defined as stores between five thousand and twelve thousand square feet with an average merchandise price point under five dollars; and

WHEREAS, dollar stores, which are publicly traded companies that have rapidly increased over the last decade, have over thirty thousand locations and three hundred thousand workers nationwide; and

WHEREAS, there is collectively one thousand three hundred sixty-eight dollar stores located in this state, with stores located in nearly every parish; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the rapid increase of store locations and employees, dollar stores have also recorded billions of dollars in profit in recent years; and

WHEREAS, dollar stores are becoming an increasingly critical part of the retail landscape in rural and urban communities, commonly referred to as food deserts which means that there are fewer retail options providing healthier and nutritional options; and

WHEREAS, dollar stores have significant impact on small businesses, grocery stores, and community identity; and

WHEREAS, the starting wage for workers employed by dollar stores in this state is below ten dollars per hour, and these minimal wages can lead to understaffing; and

WHEREAS, as a result of understaffing issues, there is a growing concern about safety issues; and

WHEREAS, Time Magazine published an article in April 2023 which reported that the United States Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) "is so frustrated with the persistence of worker safety violations at [certain dollar stores] that it has started putting out press releases lambasting the stores and their seeming determination to ignore the things OSHA inspectors repeatedly tell them to do"; and

WHEREAS, according to an article published in April 2023 by the Business and Learning Resources, OSHA has proposed more than sixteen million dollars in fines against certain dollar stores, in addition to placing the corporation and parent company of these stores on its Severe Violator Enforcement Program; and

WHEREAS, in spite of these citations and sanctions, dollar stores continue to violate federal regulations and as such they pose a severe threat to the workers of this state.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby create a task force to study the impact of dollar stores in this state and to make recommendations for policies that protect customers, workers, and local economies and to submit a written report of its findings and recommendations to the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana no later than February 1, 2024.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the membership of the task force shall be as follows:

- (1) The secretary of the Louisiana Workforce Commission or his designee.
- (2) One representative from the Louisiana AFL-CIO.
- (3) One representative from the Louisiana Budget Project.
- (4) One representative from the Workplace Justice Project.
- (5) One representative from the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry.
- (6) One representative from the National Federation of Independent Business.
- (7) One representative from Greater New Orleans, Inc.
- (8) One representative from the Louisiana Retailers Association.
- (9) One representative from the Louisiana Occupational Safety and Health Administration.
- (10) Two representatives from Step Up Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Workforce Commission shall provide staff support as needed by the task force.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall convene its first meeting by October 1, 2023, and shall meet as frequently as it deems necessary for the timely performance of its duties.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that at the first meeting, the members of the task force shall elect a chairperson, who shall preside over the task force.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that members of the task force shall serve without compensation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall study and make recommendations on matters that include but are not limited to the following:

(1) The safety conditions, if any, in place for customers, communities, and workers at dollar stores and how these conditions can be improved.

(2) The wages of dollar store workers and what is the impact, if any, that these wages have on workers based on their geographic location in the state in comparison to wages at dollar stores outside of this state.

(3) The economic impact of dollar stores on existing businesses, the ability for new businesses to open, and the prevalence of healthy food options.

(4) The effectiveness of staffing levels at dollar stores, especially as it relates to crime and violence.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Louisiana Workforce Commission, the executive director of the Louisiana Budget Project, the director of the Workplace Justice Project, the president of the Louisiana AFL-CIO, the president of the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry, the state director of the National Federation of Independent Business, the executive director of the Louisiana Retailers Association, the president of Greater New Orleans, Inc., the state representative for the Louisiana Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and the co-directors of Step Up Louisiana.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES