

Regular Session, 2011

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 106

BY REPRESENTATIVE HOFFMANN AND SENATOR WALSWORTH

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Department of Health and Hospitals and the Department of Education to work together to develop a comprehensive program for elementary, middle, and high school students as well as students in institutions of higher education to emphasize, encourage, and teach the Heimlich maneuver.

WHEREAS, the Heimlich maneuver is an emergency technique for preventing suffocation when a person's airway becomes blocked by a foreign object; and

WHEREAS, by employing the Heimlich maneuver a foreign body is removed from the trachea or pharynx, where it prevented the flow of air to a person's lungs; and

WHEREAS, the Heimlich maneuver was introduced by Henry J. Heimlich, M.D., in 1974; and

WHEREAS, since its introduction, the Heimlich maneuver has saved more than fifty thousand people in the United States alone from choking; and

WHEREAS, Lance Smithson, a part-time emergency medical technician and full-time fireman with the West Monroe Fire Department was involved in the heroic off-duty rescue of choking victim, Sandie Winters, by application of the Heimlich maneuver; and

WHEREAS, the Heimlich maneuver is typically performed on a victim in the vertical position, by standing behind the victim with arms wrapped around the victim's waist and employing an upward thrust just below the rib cage to force air from the lungs; and

WHEREAS, the Heimlich maneuver is only used when the victim's airway is totally obstructed, and he is rendered unable to speak, breathe, or cough the object out; and

WHEREAS, with only partial blockage of the throat, the victim can generally work the object free by his own efforts; and

WHEREAS, this lifesaving technique could be the difference between life and death in an emergency situation; and

WHEREAS, teaching students the importance of learning the Heimlich maneuver can enable them to be prepared to potentially save the life of a fellow student, family member, friend, or even a stranger; and

WHEREAS, elementary, middle, and high schools, as well as institutions of higher education, should all be encouraged to offer qualified instruction on this technique which may be obtained from emergency medical technicians, the Red Cross, the American Heart Association, or a person certified to teach this method of choking prevention; and

WHEREAS, students should be able to describe all the steps involved in the Heimlich maneuver and demonstrate proper body position, hand placement, and quick upward thrusts; and

WHEREAS, there are also residual benefits to students learning to perform the Heimlich maneuver in that they are likely to become more careful in daily activities, thereby reducing the risks of an accident or injury.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Department of Health and Hospitals and the Department of Education to work together to develop a comprehensive program for elementary, middle, and high schools students as well as students in institutions of higher education to emphasize, encourage, and teach the Heimlich maneuver.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals and the superintendent of the Department of Education.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE