

2015 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 129

BY REPRESENTATIVE BARROW

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To create a task force to study health services delivery and financing in the Baton Rouge region, and to require the task force to report findings and recommendations to the Capital Region Legislative Delegation and the legislative committees on health and welfare.

WHEREAS, profound changes in healthcare delivery and financing in Baton Rouge have occurred in the past several years, dramatically impacting access to care in the city and surrounding region; and

WHEREAS, these changes include the closure in 2013 of the city's state-owned public hospital, the Earl K. Long Medical Center, and privatization of the services formerly delivered there; the closure of the city's mental health emergency room extension, which was part of the Earl K. Long Medical Center and kept patients with mental illness from congesting hospital emergency departments and jails; and the closure of the emergency department of the Baton Rouge General Medical Center's Mid-City hospital due to its inability to cover the cost of treating the overwhelming number of uninsured patients that it began to see in the aftermath of the closure of Earl K. Long; and

WHEREAS, as evidenced by final passage of House Bill No. 1493 of the 2010 Regular Session requiring reports to the legislature relative to privatization of services of the Earl K. Long Medical Center, which was the first of nine hospitals in the state's ten-hospital system to be privatized, and by extensive debate concerning the state health system in every session since 2010, the legislature has expressed deep concern about the fiscal and public health consequences of hospital privatization since the outset of the privatization efforts; and

WHEREAS, the executive budget for the state proposed for state fiscal year 2015-2016 lacked sufficient funds for Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center, the private partner now responsible for the indigent care and physician training services that had

formerly been delivered at Earl K. Long, to continue delivering the services which it is obligated to provide pursuant to its cooperative endeavor agreement with the state; and

WHEREAS, after the 2015-2016 executive budget was issued, officials with Our Lady of the Lake determined that the seven million four hundred thousand dollar shortfall in public funding it faced originally for provision of publicly-required services had doubled to approximately fifteen million dollars due to increased emergency department utilization resulting from the closure of the Baton Rouge General Mid-City emergency department; and

WHEREAS, supply of and demand for medical care in the capital region have become increasingly misaligned in recent years; and

WHEREAS, these circumstances are of serious concern to policymakers at the city, regional, and state level.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby create a task force to study and make recommendations concerning health services delivery and financing in the Baton Rouge region.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall be composed of the following members:

- (1) The mayor-president of East Baton Rouge Parish or his designee.
- (2) The chief executive officer of the Baton Rouge Area Foundation or his designee.
- (3) Two members representing the Capital Region Legislative Delegation.
- (4) The chief executive officer of Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center or his designee.
- (5) The chief executive officer of the Baton Rouge General Health System or his designee.
- (6) The chief executive officer of Lane Regional Medical Center or his designee.
- (7) The chief executive officer of Ochsner Health System or his designee.
- (8) The coroner of East Baton Rouge Parish or his designee.
- (9) The administrator of East Baton Rouge Parish Emergency Medical Services or his designee.
- (10) The chief executive officer of the Baton Rouge Area Chamber or his designee.
- (11) The president of the Louisiana AFL-CIO or his designee.
- (12) The lead organizer of Together Baton Rouge or his designee.

(13) The president of the Capital Area Medical Society or his designee.

(14) One member representing the Campaign for Healthcare for Everyone - Louisiana.

(15) The president of the Louisiana Center for Health Equity or his designee.

(16) The secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals or his designee.

(17) The director of the Louisiana Budget Project or his designee.

(18) The chairman of the board of directors of Woman's Hospital Foundation or his designee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall examine issues related to health services delivery and financing in the Baton Rouge region including, without limitation, the following:

(1) Barriers to access to health care faced by low- to moderate-income persons.

(2) Impacts of cuts to federal disproportionate share hospital funding provided through the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act that finance expansion of Medicaid programs of states which elect to participate in Medicaid expansion.

(3) Effects on public health of the closure of the state-operated public hospital in Baton Rouge and privatization of the services formerly delivered there.

(4) Impacts on private hospitals which do not operate under a cooperative endeavor agreement with the state of providing uncompensated care.

(5) Policies which could expand the capacity of public and private urgent care clinics to meet the healthcare needs of medically underserved populations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the president of the Louisiana Center for Health Equity shall take such actions as are necessary to ensure that the task force convenes on or before September 1, 2015.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that at its initial meeting, the task force members shall elect a chairperson, and shall adopt rules of procedure and any other policies as may be necessary to facilitate the work of the task force.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall submit a written report of findings and recommendations concerning health services delivery and financing in the Baton Rouge region to the members of the Capital Region Legislative Delegation, the House Committee on Health and Welfare, and the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare no

later than thirty days prior to the convening of the 2016 Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the mayor-president of East Baton Rouge Parish, the chief executive officer of the Baton Rouge Area Foundation, the chief executive officer of Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center, the chief executive officer of the Baton Rouge General Health System, the chief executive officer of Lane Regional Medical Center, the chief executive officer of Ochsner Health System, the coroner of East Baton Rouge Parish, the administrator of East Baton Rouge Parish Emergency Medical Services, the chief executive officer of the Baton Rouge Area Chamber, the president of the Louisiana AFL-CIO, the lead organizer of Together Baton Rouge, the president of the Capital Area Medical Society, the president of the Campaign for Healthcare for Everyone - Louisiana, the president of the Louisiana Center for Health Equity, the secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals, the director of the Louisiana Budget Project, and the chairman of the board of directors of Woman's Hospital Foundation.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE