

2015 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 129

BY REPRESENTATIVE BARROW

HEALTH CARE: Creates a task force to study and make recommendations concerning health services delivery and financing in the Baton Rouge region

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

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

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

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

17 WHEREAS, as evidenced by final passage of House Bill No. 1493 of the 2010
18 Regular Session requiring reports to the legislature relative to privatization of services of the
19 Earl K. Long Medical Center, which was the first of nine hospitals in the state's ten-hospital
20 system to be privatized, and by extensive debate concerning the state health system in every

1 session since 2010, the legislature has expressed deep concern about the fiscal and public
2 health consequences of hospital privatization since the outset of the privatization efforts; and

3 WHEREAS, the executive budget for the state proposed for state fiscal year 2015-
4 2016 lacked sufficient funds for Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center, the private
5 partner now responsible for the indigent care and physician training services that had
6 formerly been delivered at Earl K. Long, to continue delivering the services which it is
7 obligated to provide pursuant to its cooperative endeavor agreement with the state; and

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

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

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

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

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

- 22 (1) The mayor-president of East Baton Rouge Parish or his designee.
- 23 (2) The chief executive officer of the Baton Rouge Area Foundation or his designee.
- 24 (3) Two members representing the Capital Region Legislative Delegation.
- 25 (4) The chief executive officer of Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center
26 or his designee.
- 27 (5) The chief executive officer of the Baton Rouge General Health System or his
28 designee.
- 29 (6) The chief executive officer of Lane Regional Medical Center or his designee.
- 30 (7) The chief executive officer of Ochsner Health System or his designee.

1 (8) The coroner of East Baton Rouge Parish or his designee.

2 (9) The administrator of East Baton Rouge Parish Emergency Medical Services or
3 his designee.

4 (10) The chief executive officer of the Baton Rouge Area Chamber or his designee.

5 (11) The president of the Louisiana AFL-CIO or his designee.

6 (12) The lead organizer of Together Baton Rouge or his designee.

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

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

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

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

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

15 (1) Barriers to access to healthcare faced by low- to moderate-income persons.

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

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

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

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

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

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

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall submit a written report of
2 findings and recommendations concerning health services delivery and financing in the
3 Baton Rouge region to the members of the Capital Region Legislative Delegation, the House
4 Committee on Health and Welfare, and the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare no
5 later than thirty days prior to the convening of the 2016 Regular Session of the Legislature
6 of Louisiana.

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
8 mayor-president of East Baton Rouge Parish, the chief executive officer of the Baton Rouge
9 Area Foundation, the chief executive officer of Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical
10 Center, the chief executive officer of the Baton Rouge General Health System, the chief
11 executive officer of Lane Regional Medical Center, the chief executive officer of Ochsner
12 Health System, the coroner of East Baton Rouge Parish, the administrator of East Baton
13 Rouge Parish Emergency Medical Services, the chief executive officer of the Baton Rouge
14 Area Chamber, the president of the Louisiana AFL-CIO, the lead organizer of Together
15 Baton Rouge, the president of the Capital Area Medical Society, the president of the
16 Campaign for Healthcare for Everyone - Louisiana, the president of the Louisiana Center for
17 Health Equity, and the secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HCR 129 Engrossed

2015 Regular Session

Barrow

Creates a 17-member task force to study and make recommendations concerning health services delivery and financing in the Baton Rouge region.

Requires the task force to submit a written report of findings and recommendations to the members of the Capital Region Legislative Delegation and the legislative committees on health and welfare no later than 30 days prior to the convening of the 2016 RS.

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Health and Welfare to the original bill:

1. Revise a statement regarding issues of concern at the city and state level to indicate that the issues are of concern at the city, regional, and state level.

2. In the listing of task force members, delete a reference to a nonexistent position with the Campaign for Healthcare for Everyone - Louisiana, and provide instead that one member representing that group shall be a task force member.