

2017 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 17

BY REPRESENTATIVES HOFFMANN, ARMES, BACALA, CARPENTER, STEVE CARTER, CHANEY, COX, DAVIS, DEVILLIER, EDMONDS, EMERSON, FALCONER, FOIL, GISCLAIR, GUINN, HOWARD, LEBAS, MARCELLE, MCFARLAND, POPE, RICHARD, SCHRODER, STEFANSKI, THOMAS, AND WHITE

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Department of Children and Family Services to study the issue of reporting of child abuse and neglect in military families, and to recommend to the legislature policies for improving coordination between the department and the United States Department of Defense in matters relating to child welfare.

WHEREAS, the Department of Children and Family Services, referred to hereafter as "DCFS", works to meet the needs of this state's most vulnerable children by carrying out vital child protection functions; and

WHEREAS, these functions include investigations by the DCFS child welfare division of reports of child abuse and neglect; and

WHEREAS, current data indicates that approximately seventy percent of active duty military families reside in the civilian community; and

WHEREAS, the secretary of the United States Department of Defense is required by law, 10 U.S.C. 1787, to coordinate with civilian child welfare services for the purpose of obtaining information concerning allegations of child abuse and neglect involving children in military families; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Defense depends upon collaboration with state agencies such as DCFS to fulfill this obligation to address child abuse and neglect; and

WHEREAS, the Family Advocacy Program of the Department of Defense requires the military services to establish agreements with state and local child welfare services to collaborate on the oversight of cases involving military families; and

WHEREAS, changes in state laws, regulations, and policies could facilitate development of more consistent agreements and better coordination of state child welfare functions and military protective and rehabilitative services, with the overall goal of achieving the most effective partnership between the Department of Defense and the state to best serve military children and families; and

WHEREAS, examples of model laws providing for such coordination of child welfare functions are those of the states of South Carolina and Washington, which direct the collection of military affiliation information as part of the child abuse and neglect response process and the sharing of pertinent case information with the appropriate military authorities.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Department of Children and Family Services to study the issue of reporting of child abuse and neglect in military families, and to recommend policies for improving coordination between the department and the United States Department of Defense in matters relating to child welfare.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in developing the study and recommendations requested in this Resolution, the Department of Children and Family Services shall engage, collaborate with, and obtain information and perspective from representatives of the Family Advocacy Program of the Department of Defense, Prevent Child Abuse Louisiana, the Child Advocacy Centers and CASA of Louisiana, and any other stakeholder groups with an interest in child abuse prevention as deemed appropriate by the secretary of the Department of Children and Family Services.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Children and Family Services shall submit a written report of its recommendations resulting from the study requested in this Resolution to the House Committee on Health and Welfare, the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare, the House Committee on Judiciary, and the Senate Judiciary C Committee on or before February 1, 2018.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the deputy assistant secretary of defense for military community and family policy of the United States Department of Defense, the secretary of the Department of Children and Family

Services, the executive director of Prevent Child Abuse Louisiana, and the president of LouisianaChildren.org.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE