

2017 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 26

BY REPRESENTATIVE MORENO

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Louisiana State Police Crime Lab and the Louisiana attorney general to study and make recommendations on the implementation of and protocols for the effective use of a sexual assault collection kit tracking system in Louisiana, and to report their findings to the legislature no later than January 1, 2018.

WHEREAS, national studies indicate that approximately one in five women are victims of rape in their lifetime and approximately one in twenty women suffer other sexual assaults; and

WHEREAS, victims often turn to hospitals and local law enforcement agencies for help, and because of the sense of urgency in collecting evidence of a sexual assault from a victim's body, the victim must undergo examinations and questioning immediately after the commission of the assault by healthcare professionals and law enforcement officials who are attempting to collect evidence of the crime; and

WHEREAS, sexual assault collection kits are designed to assist in the preservation of human biological specimen or specimens collected during a forensic medical examination from the victim of a sexual assault; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, the state of Washington enacted legislation establishing a statewide sexual assault collection kit tracking system; and

WHEREAS, Washington's system tracks the location and status of sexual assault kits throughout the criminal justice process, allows medical facilities performing sexual assault forensic examinations, law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, and other entities in custody of the kits to update and track the status and location of the kits, allows victims of sexual assault to anonymously track or receive updates regarding the status of their kits, and uses electronic technology allowing continuous access; and

WHEREAS, it is important that sexual assault victims have access to information about the status of their sexual assault collection kits; and

WHEREAS, a sexual assault collection kit tracking system would provide the state with comprehensive information about the amount of kits submitted, the testing status of the kits, and testing time frames; and

WHEREAS, it is crucial that as the tracking system develops, victim privacy is strictly upheld to protect the victim's identity and safety.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Louisiana State Police Crime Lab and the Louisiana attorney general to study and make recommendations on the implementation of and protocols for the effective use of a sexual assault collection kit tracking system, and to report their findings to the legislature no later than January 1, 2018.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana State Police Crime Lab and the Louisiana attorney general are to identify all other crime labs in Louisiana, in addition to the Louisiana State Police Crime Lab, that analyze sexual assault collection kits.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana State Police Crime Lab and the Louisiana attorney general are to study and report the costs of implementation and use of a sexual assault collection kit tracking system.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana State Police Crime Lab and the Louisiana attorney general are to study and report the benefits of using a sexual assault collection kit tracking system and to review programs and protocols from other jurisdictions throughout the United States, to identify best practices from those jurisdictions that have successfully implemented and used a sexual assault collection kit tracking system.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in studying and developing the recommendations for the implementation of a sexual assault collection kit tracking system in Louisiana, the Louisiana State Police Crime Lab and the Louisiana attorney general are to solicit and obtain input from the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Criminal Justice, the Louisiana Foundation Against Sexual Assault, Sexual Trauma Awareness and Response, and other stakeholders, including but not limited to healthcare professionals, law enforcement agencies, crime labs that analyze sexual assault

collection kits, and prosecutors, as are necessary for the implementation of a sexual assault collection kit tracking system.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that suitable copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Louisiana State Police Crime Lab and the Louisiana attorney general.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE