

Regular Session, 2010

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 262

BY REPRESENTATIVE LEGER

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the secretary of the Department of Environmental Quality to establish and appoint an Electronic Recycling and Reuse Task Force to determine viable methods for the reuse and recycling of electronic devices for all Louisiana citizens, to eliminate the threat to the environment caused by disposal of electronic waste in landfills, to review what is currently successful in this state in the area of electronic recycling, and to recommend the expansion of best practices and new innovative solutions at the state, community, and individual levels.

WHEREAS, computers as well as monitors, cellphones, phones, televisions, and other electronic material may pose serious environmental threats when disposed of improperly because they contain hazardous materials, including lead, mercury and other heavy metals, materials which leach out of those items in a landfill environment leading to the hazardous materials being introduced into the surrounding land and even into the groundwater; and

WHEREAS, according to the Environmental Protection Agency, close to four hundred million units of electronic material are discarded every year in the United States totaling over three million tons; and

WHEREAS, of this material discarded less than fourteen percent is currently being reused or recycled; and

WHEREAS, electronic discards (e-waste) is the fastest growing municipal segment of the municipal waste stream in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the reuse of one hundred computers with monitors saves enough electricity to power sixty-eight households in the United States for a year, and the greenhouse reduction equivalent of removing forty-eight passenger cars from the road each year; and

WHEREAS, recycling one hundred computers and monitors saves the electricity equivalent of powering two and three-quarters households in the United States for a year and the same as removing two passenger cars from the road per year; and

WHEREAS, the estimated demand for low cost refurbished computers in the United States for schools, nonprofit organizations, and low-income families is close to twenty-five million; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana has a high rate of poverty and many low-income families are unable to afford new computers creating a growing digital divide, and many schools, Head Start programs, and nonprofit organizations in Louisiana are unable to afford new technology; and

WHEREAS, the availability of refurbished electronics, primarily computers and monitors, can help bridge this divide; and

WHEREAS, there exists a need to develop a comprehensive statewide strategy to address the problems associated with the disposal of computers, televisions, and other electronic equipment in Louisiana's landfills and to study ways to encourage the reuse or refurbishment and recycling of these products and their component parts.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the secretary of the Department of Environmental Quality is hereby urged and requested to establish and appoint an Electronic Recycling and Reuse Task Force to determine viable methods for the reuse and recycling of electronic devices for all Louisiana citizens, to eliminate the threat to the environment caused by disposal of electronic waste in landfills, to review what is currently successful in this state in the area of electronic recycling, and to recommend the expansion of best practices and new innovative solutions at the state, community, and individual levels.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall be charged with gathering information and making recommendations to the department, the governor's office, and the legislature relative to policies which include the following:

- (1) Consideration of a ban on the landfill disposal of e-waste.
- (2) Creation of green jobs through the implementation and expansion of programs for the recycling and reuse of electronic waste.

(3) Build on, not supplant or undermine, the existing infrastructure which is primarily in the nonprofit and private sector that currently diverts electronic waste in Louisiana.

(4) Increase diversion rates for electronic devices.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Electronic Recycling and Reuse Task Force consist of the following members appointed by the secretary of the Department of Environmental Quality:

(1) One employee from the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality who is familiar with electronic recycling.

(2) One member who is from a small local government recycling program.

(3) One member who is from an urban municipality public recycling program.

(4) One member from Capital Area Corporate Recycling.

(5) One member who is employed by a Louisiana-based private recycling business.

(6) One member who is a computer or television manufacturer.

(7) One member who is employed by a private landfill operator.

(8) One member who is employed by a waste hauling business.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE