

Regular Session, 2014

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 34

BY REPRESENTATIVES SMITH, BARROW, HILL, KATRINA JACKSON, MORENO,
NORTON, ST. GERMAIN, THIERRY, AND WOODRUFF AND SENATORS
BROOME AND PETERSON

CORRECTIONS: Commends DPS&C for transferring certain equipment to the La.
Correctional Institute for Women to begin offering female inmates training programs
for high-demand and high-wage jobs

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A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To commend the Department of Public Safety and Corrections for moving the mobile
welding unit from the Louisiana State Penitentiary to the Louisiana Correctional
Institute for Women to begin offering female inmates education and training
programs for nontraditional, high-demand, and high-wage jobs.

WHEREAS, nationally, the wage gap between men and women improved slightly
from 2011 to 2012 according to the latest United States census data with women now
earning approximately seventy-eight cents on average to every dollar a man earns; and

WHEREAS, during this same period of time, despite an increasing number of women
in the Louisiana workforce (forty-eight percent of full-time, year-round Louisiana labor
force) according to a report by the Louisiana Women's Policy and Research Commission,
the gender wage gap in Louisiana actually grew wider with women earning approximately
sixty-six cents for every dollar earned by a Louisiana man; and

WHEREAS, engaging women in nontraditional employment, which includes any
occupation that employs far fewer women than men such as trades, crafts, technology, and
science fields, offers several benefits that enable women to become economically self-
sufficient, support their families, and build assets to obtain a home or pursue a higher
education; and

1 WHEREAS, with more than \$60 billion of plant expansions and new plants
2 announced in Louisiana, according to the Louisiana Women's Policy and Research
3 Commission report, Louisiana faces an industry demand for more than 86,300 new skilled
4 crafts workers through 2016, creating opportunities for women in Louisiana to pursue high-
5 wage careers; and

6 WHEREAS, according to the Louisiana Women's Policy and Research Commission
7 report, researchers have concluded that if more women pursue nontraditional occupations,
8 such as those in the skilled crafts, the wage gap between men and women is expected to
9 decrease; and

10 WHEREAS, pipefitters, boilermakers, carpenters, electricians, instrumentation
11 technicians, insulators, ironworkers, millwrights, heavy equipment operators, laborers, sheet
12 metal workers, plumbers, and welders will be in high demand in Louisiana; and

13 WHEREAS, over 201,000 women are held in penal institutions throughout the
14 United States with female prisoners making up over eight percent of the United States prison
15 system; and

16 WHEREAS, in 2012, 2,389 women in Louisiana were incarcerated, making up six
17 percent of all inmates in Louisiana, and women released from Louisiana state prisons face
18 high rates of unemployment and recidivism which reflect the challenge these women face
19 in reentering society and assuming mainstream social roles upon their release; and

20 WHEREAS, the Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women (LCIW) is the only
21 female correctional facility operating at the state level, and as of October 2013, LCIW only
22 offered its female inmates a job and life skills course and upholstery and culinary arts
23 training; and

24 WHEREAS, until recently, the workforce development programs at LCIW did not
25 train female inmates for high-demand careers in contrast to the job training provided at
26 men's correctional facilities, which prepare males for more lucrative potential careers upon
27 release; and

28 WHEREAS, in order to help reduce recidivism and increase employment
29 opportunities for incarcerated women upon their release, a high priority must be placed on

1 aligning the educational and training programs at LCIW with high-wage jobs, particularly
2 high-demand craft occupations currently driving the Louisiana economy; and

3 WHEREAS, the Department of Public Safety and Corrections announced that it will
4 move the mobile welding unit from the Louisiana State Penitentiary to LCIW in April of
5 2014 to begin offering female inmates education and training programs in nontraditional,
6 high-demand, and high-wage jobs.

7 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana, in conjunction
8 with the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus and the Louisiana Women's Policy and
9 Research Commission, does hereby commend the Department of Public Safety and
10 Corrections for moving the welding unit from the Louisiana State Penitentiary to the
11 Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women to begin offering female inmates education and
12 training programs for nontraditional, high-demand, and high-wage jobs.

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)]

Smith

HCR No. 34

In conjunction with the La. Legislative Women's Caucus and the La. Women's Policy and Research Commission, commends DPS&C for transferring the mobile welding unit from the La. State Penitentiary to the La. Correctional Institute for Women to begin offering female inmates education and training programs for nontraditional, high-demand, and high-wage jobs.