

2016 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 17

BY SENATOR BARROW

COMMENDATIONS. Commends Dr. Rochelle Head-Dunham for her dedicated public service with DHH, office of behavioral health.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To commend and congratulate Dr. Rochelle Head-Dunham for her dedicated public service
3 with the Department of Health and Hospitals, office of behavioral health.

4 WHEREAS, Dr. Rochelle Head-Dunham was appointed Interim Assistant Secretary
5 for the office of behavioral health on October 18, 2013, and was confirmed by the Louisiana
6 Senate on June 2, 2014; and

7 WHEREAS, she began her career with the Department of Health and Hospitals
8 (DHH) in 1990 and served as Medical Director for the office of behavioral health (OBH),
9 formerly the office of addictive disorders from 2005; and

10 WHEREAS, in her position within OBH, and as the Louisiana Single State Agency
11 (SSA) Director for the National Association of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors
12 (NASADAD) and as State Mental Health Commissioner of the National Association of State
13 Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD), Dr. Head-Dunham fostered many
14 innovative changes within the new construct of statewide managed behavioral healthcare for
15 the state; and

16 WHEREAS, she is a New Orleans native who completed a Bachelor of Science in
17 chemistry at Xavier University of New Orleans, an MD degree at Tulane University School
18 of Medicine, and Psychiatry Residency training at Albert Einstein College of Medicine in

1 Bronx, New York, was the first fellow to complete a Substance Abuse Fellowship at Tulane
2 in 1991, and is board certified in both Adult General and Addiction Psychiatry; and

3 WHEREAS, Dr. Head-Dunham advanced the skills, knowledge and application of
4 standards of care in the treatment of co-occurring mental illness and addictive disorders for
5 a broad array of providers and stakeholders, both statewide and nationally; and

6 WHEREAS, her academic appointment as Clinical Assistant Professor of Psychiatry
7 is served at both Tulane and LSU Schools of Medicine and her academic leadership has,
8 throughout her career, served as a bridge to the behavioral health (substance use and mental
9 illness) knowledge chiasm, pioneering statewide advances in knowledge, skills, and
10 application of standards of care for co-occurring mental and addictive disorders; her work
11 in this area has been foundational to statewide readiness, for Louisiana's aggressive move
12 to fully reform and integrate physical and behavioral healthcare systems; her anchoring to
13 the commitment of holistic healthcare care has expanded her reach to engage national
14 attention and support for state-led integrative efforts; and her transformative leadership style
15 galvanizes and motivates buy-in for shared vision by the members of her team; and

16 WHEREAS, Dr. Head-Dunham's pragmatic style has fostered inter and intra
17 departmental collaborations resulting in systematic unprecedented changes within the new
18 construct of Louisiana statewide integrated management of primary and behavioral
19 healthcare; and

20 WHEREAS, she served as a governor's appointee to the Medicaid Pharmacy and
21 Therapeutics (P&T) Committee and the HIV Commission and previously managed a very
22 robust solo private practice in New Orleans for fifteen years; and

23 WHEREAS, in addition to her publications and research accomplishments,
24 Dr. Head-Dunham is a member of several professional, medical, and civic organizations,
25 including Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated; and

26 WHEREAS, she resides in New Orleans with her husband and two daughters and is
27 a practicing member of the Baptist faith serving in leadership positions at her local church;
28 and

29 WHEREAS, Dr. Head-Dunham's last day in the office was Friday, March 11, 2016;
30 and

