

2023 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 51

BY SENATOR DUPLESSIS

COMMENDATIONS. Commends Odyssey House Louisiana for its mission, growth, and impact over fifty years of service in treating individuals with chronic addictions.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To commend Odyssey House Louisiana on fifty years of service in treating individuals with
3 chronic addictions.

4 WHEREAS, Odyssey House Louisiana (OHL) was established on February 20, 1973,
5 in New Orleans by a small group of committed individuals, including its founder and first
6 executive director, Alice "Maggie" Pike; and

7 WHEREAS, OHL traces its roots to the original Odyssey House therapeutic
8 community founded in New York City by Dr. Judianne Densen Gerber in 1967, which
9 pioneered a nontraditional, family-centered approach for the treatment of substance use and
10 mental health disorders; and

11 WHEREAS, OHL is headquartered in its original home in the Tremé/Lafitte
12 neighborhood in a historic facility that has been used to serve the community for over 150
13 years; the home was erected in 1866 at the request of Thomy Lafon for the Sisters of the
14 Holy Family to establish an orphanage for children displaced by the Civil War; upon Lafon's
15 death in 1893, his bequests funded an expansion to the facility and its services; and with the
16 relocation of the Sisters of the Holy Family in 1973 and the support of community donations,
17 the building was purchased for the creation of Odyssey House Louisiana; and

18 WHEREAS, OHL has grown since its inception from a small residential treatment

1 program to a robust network of services across New Orleans and throughout south
2 Louisiana, including programs in Lake Charles and Morgan City; and

3 WHEREAS, OHL is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization and primarily serves
4 individuals who cannot pay for their own treatment, and serves people from all parts of the
5 state; its commitment to those most vulnerable and at risk has remained constant since its
6 founding; and

7 WHEREAS, OHL's vast continuum of services includes medically monitored detox,
8 short-term and long-term residential treatment, treatment for pregnant women and women
9 with dependent children, and sober living, in combination with case management, housing,
10 mental health, and primary care; and

11 WHEREAS, OHL's dynamic model of integrating primary and behavioral health care
12 with an emphasis on addiction through its federally qualified health centers has been
13 recognized and replicated across the country; and

14 WHEREAS, the efforts of OHL's Prevention Department with additional assistance
15 through related grant funding have saved thousands of lives through naloxone distribution
16 and training, infectious disease testing, and fentanyl test strip distribution, as well as
17 development of radio, podcast, and social media content addressing substance use-specific
18 issues related to youth; and

19 WHEREAS, OHL opened the state's first Sobering Center in 2019 in partnership with
20 the city of New Orleans, which provides a safe place for individuals to sober up, deferring
21 them from jail or the emergency room and ensuring convenient access to further treatment,
22 thereby reducing burden on hospitals and the criminal justice system; and

23 WHEREAS, OHL helped to rebuild health service delivery systems in New Orleans
24 following Hurricane Katrina and remained operational throughout the COVID-19 pandemic
25 to ensure that individuals seeking treatment could have access to services; OHL continues
26 to expand its capacity to meet the growing community need for treatment.

27 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana
28 does hereby commend Odyssey House Louisiana, its staff, board, leadership, and supporters
29 on fifty years of service to the state of Louisiana in treating individuals with chronic
30 addictions.

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to
2 Odyssey House Louisiana.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Dawn Romero Watson.

DIGEST

SR 51 Original

2023 Regular Session

Duplessis

Commends Odyssey House Louisiana on fifty years of service in treating individuals with chronic addictions.