

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 51

BY SENATOR MILLS

A RESOLUTION

To designate April 25, 2013, as "School-Based Health Center Awareness Day".

WHEREAS, school-based health centers are an important statewide resource helping to address the health care needs of underserved and uninsured children, providing needed preventative, diagnostic and treatment services, including direct primary and mental health care for acute and chronic illnesses, health education, case management assistance, and immunizations; and

WHEREAS, the centers provide vital counseling for more recently understood health care concerns that have replaced infectious diseases as the major ailments of childhood, including such risk factors as childhood obesity, smoking, substance abuse, violence, and safety issues, as well as behavioral problems ranging from mild to severe; and

WHEREAS, in 1990, as policy makers became concerned about the high morbidity and mortality rates of adolescents, the Office of Public Health was asked to determine the feasibility of opening school-based health centers; and

WHEREAS, in 1991, the Adolescent School Health Initiative was enacted and school-based health centers came into existence; and

WHEREAS, a center provides convenient access to comprehensive, primary and preventive physical and mental health services for public school students at the school site; and

WHEREAS, as students spend a significant portion of their day on school grounds, school-based health centers are accessible, convenient, encourage family and community involvement, reduce student absenteeism, reduce parental leave from work for doctor visits, and work with school personnel to meet the needs of the students and their families; and

WHEREAS, school-based health centers complement school nurses and social workers, where they exist, since school nurses and social workers are often limited in the scope of care they can give students; and

WHEREAS, the centers are able to provide comprehensive health services to students, providing treatment for minor illness and injury, comprehensive physicals, behavioral health counseling, treatments for chronic or acute diseases, required vaccines, and other beneficial services to enhance the learning environment of a school; and

WHEREAS, school-based health centers provide primary and preventative care to school age children in twenty-eight parishes throughout Louisiana, in sixty-six school-based health centers; and

WHEREAS, there were 153,000 patient visits to school-based health centers during Fiscal Year 2010-2011.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana that April 25, 2013, is hereby designated as "School-Based Health Center Awareness Day".

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Louisiana Assembly on School-Based Health Care.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE