

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 77

BY SENATOR FRED MILLS

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to take immediate action to share information, expertise, and resources in an effort to coordinate public, private, and charitable sectors to abate hunger in Louisiana.

WHEREAS, Louisiana consistently faces some of the highest rates of hunger in the country particularly amongst children and seniors; and

WHEREAS, according to the United States Department of Agriculture, one in six Louisiana households struggles to put food on the table; and

WHEREAS, the National Foundation to End Senior Hunger ranks Louisiana as the second worst state for seniors at risk of hunger with twenty-four percent, or nearly one in four, seniors facing food insecurity; and

WHEREAS, Feeding America estimates that one in four Louisiana children live in households that are food insecure, and in several rural parishes one-third of children are food insecure; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that nearly one million Louisiana residents experienced food insecurity during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, a 2020 survey of Louisiana food banks revealed an eighty percent rise in need above typical levels, with nearly forty percent of those clients brand new to the emergency food system; and

WHEREAS, while the number of COVID-19 cases are falling and vaccine distribution is rising, this hunger crisis is not over and it is important for Louisiana policymakers to join with local food banks and other community-based partners to ensure that all Louisianians have enough food on the table to live healthy, hunger-free lives for the duration of the pandemic, economic recovery, and beyond.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to take immediate action to share information, expertise, and resources in an effort to coordinate public, private, and charitable sectors to abate hunger in Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that on or before October 1, 2021, the Louisiana Department of Health shall host a summit on this matter to gather representatives from a vast network of expertise in one setting to ensure that proper attention is given to this crisis and to chart a pathway forward to combat hunger in Louisiana by providing short-term food relief while seeking long-term solutions that can be used as a national and worldwide model of excellence.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that on or before December 31, 2021, the Louisiana Department of Health shall submit a summit recommendation report to the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana identifying the long-term actions being proposed by summit participants to address the hunger crisis in Louisiana.

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

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE