

House Committee on Health and Welfare

Minutes of Meeting
2024 Second Extraordinary Session
February 27, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Dustin Miller, chairman of the House Committee on Health and Welfare, called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m. in Room 5, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Dustin Miller, chairman
Representative Stephanie Hunter Berault
Representative Rhonda Gaye Butler, vice chairman
Representative Emily Chenevert
Representative Raymond J. Crews
Representative Kellee Hennessy Dickerson
Representative Michael Charles Echols
Representative Peter F. Egan, Sr.
Representative Adrian Fisher
Representative Steven Jackson
Representative Wayne McMahan
Representative Brach Jerad Myers
Representative Larry Selders
Representative Joseph A. Stagni
Representative Christopher Turner

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative Jason Hughes

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Meah Johnson, attorney
Taylor Chrisman, attorney
Kristy Neubrandner, committee administrative assistant

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Cheryl Domino, sergeant at arms
Nevonda Reed, division director

III. BUSINESS**Introduction of the committee members and staff**

Representative Miller introduced the staff of the House Health and Welfare Committee. He then asked the members of the committee to introduce themselves.

Consideration and adoption of committee rules

Representative Miller offered a motion to adopt the committee rules. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Miller, Berault, Butler, Chenevert, Crews, Dickerson, Echols, Egan, Fisher, McMahan, Myers, Stagni, and Turner voted yea.

Presentation by the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services

David Matlock, Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), 627 North Fourth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only. He detailed his vision for the future of DCFS.

Toby Comeaux, DCFS, 627 North Fourth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only and presented a slideshow, Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records.

Amanda Brunson, DCFS, 627 North Fourth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only. She continued with the presentation of the slideshow.

Aly Rau, DCFS, 627 North Fourth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only. She continued with the presentation of the slideshow.

Ricky Montet, DCFS, 627 North Fourth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only. He continued with the presentation of the slideshow.

Consideration and adoption of the report submitted by the House Subcommittee on Mental Health created in response to House Resolution No. 71 of the 2023 Regular Session by Representative Laurie Schlegel

Representative Echols described the key topics in the report submitted by the House Subcommittee on Mental Health. A copy of the report, Exhibit B, was provided to the committee members and is

included in the committee records. Representative Echols offered a motion to adopt the report. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Miller, Berault, Butler, Chenevert, Crews, Dickerson, Echols, Egan, Jackson, McMahan, Myers, Selders, Stagni, and Turner voted yea.

Presentation by the Louisiana Department of Health

Ralph Abraham, Louisiana Department of Health (LDH), 645 North Fourth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only. He discussed the challenges his department faces and outlined his goals for the future.

Drew Maranto, LDH, 645 North Fourth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only. He discussed his professional background and his current role at LDH. Then he informally introduced to the committee some of the LDH staff members.

Pete Croughan, LDH, 645 North Fourth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only. He detailed his educational and professional background and articulated his goals for what he hopes to achieve at LDH.

Michael Harrington, LDH, 645 North Fourth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only. Mr. Harrington discussed his background in health care. He defined his responsibilities at LDH as devising strategies to achieve the department's goals and addressing the associated challenges.

Representative Butler in the chair.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 1 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Presentation by Karen Wyble on the findings of the Health Disparities in Rural Areas Task Force created in response to House Concurrent Resolution No. 100 of the 2023 Regular Session by Representative Dustin Miller

Representative Miller in the chair.

Karen Wyble, House Concurrent Resolution No. 100 Task Force, P.O. Box 678, Arnaudville, LA 70512, spoke for information only and provided a handout, Exhibit C, which is included in the committee records. She spoke in detail about the findings of the task force and urged members to consider crafting legislation based on these findings.

Ecoee Rooney, Louisiana State Nurses Association, 15151 Old Farms Road, Folsom, LA 70437, spoke for information only. She discussed the necessity for improved approaches in addressing adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).

Jennifer Lemoine, Louisiana Association of Nurse Practitioners, 103 Port Royal Circle, Lafayette, LA 70508, spoke for information only. She described the overwhelming workforce shortage in health care.

Karen Lyon, Louisiana State Board of Nursing, 17373 Perkins Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70810, spoke for information only. She expressed her concern over the possible closure of numerous rural hospitals as a result of their insufficient funding.

Representative Miller invited those in attendance who wished to provide public testimony to address the committee.

Tom Costanza, Louisiana Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2431 South Acadian Thruway, Suite 250, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, spoke for information only. He expressed his support of the committee's work.

Katie Corkern, Rural Mental Health Alliance, P.O. Box 1048, Amite, LA 70422, spoke for information only. She expressed her concerns regarding the challenges associated with navigating the authorization process mandated by Managed Care Organizations (MCOs).

Corhonda Corley, Louisiana Families of Individuals with Disabilities, 8815 Wilmore Drive, Zachary, LA 70791, spoke for information only. She shared her concern that insufficient attention is given to the challenges faced by families of individuals with disabilities.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Egan offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Miller, Berault, Chenevert, Dickerson, Egan, Jackson, Myers, Selders, and Stagni voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:12 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Dustin Miller
House Committee on Health and Welfare

Date adopted: March 21, 2024