

## **House Committee on Health and Welfare**

Minutes of Meeting  
2024 Regular Session  
March 26, 2024

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

Representative Dustin Miller, chairman of the House Committee on Health and Welfare, called the meeting to order at 9:01 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 Jason Hughes  
Representative Wayne McMahan  
Representative Brach Jerad Myers  
Representative Larry Selders  
Representative Joseph A. Stagni  
Representative Christopher Turner

#### **MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Representative Steven Jackson

#### **STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

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

**ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:**

Rebecca Marshall, sergeant at arms  
Jaubert Ambeau, chief sergeant at arms  
Elizabeth Douglas, sergeant at arms  
Nevonda Reed, division director

**III. DISCUSSION OF LEGISLATION****House Bill No. 558 by Representative Turner**

Representative Turner presented House Bill No. 558, which provides relative to the Local Healthcare Provider Participation Program.

Ryan Cross, Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady Health System, 4200 Essen Lane, Baton Rouge, LA 70809, spoke in support of House Bill No. 558.

Scott Prouty, Allegiance Health Management, 3800 Viking Drive, Bossier City, LA 71111, spoke in support of House Bill No. 558.

Pam Diez, Louisiana Department of Health (LDH), 628 North Fourth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 558.

Jerry Phillips, Rural Hospital Coalition, 301 Main Street, Suite 1620, Baton Rouge, LA 70801, spoke in support of House Bill No. 558.

Representative Echols offered amendments to:

- (1) Change references from "rural institutional provider" to "rural hospital".
- (2) Insert language regarding the required amount of the local hospital assessment payment.
- (3) Require local hospitals to meet all relevant CMS tests.
- (4) Establish provisions relative to rate setting, the collection of revenues, and reductions.
- (5) Change the "base rate payment" reference to "payment for the benefit of hospitals in the parish".
- (6) Make technical corrections.

Representative Echols offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Miller, Berault, Butler, Chenevert, Crews, Dickerson, Echols, Egan, Fisher, Hughes, McMahan, Myers, Selders, Stagni, and Turner voted yea.

Representative Echols offered a motion to report House Bill No. 558 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 558 was reported with amendments by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Miller, Berault, Butler, Chenevert, Crews, Dickerson, Echols, Egan, Fisher, Hughes, McMahan, Myers, Selders, Stagni, and Turner voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 7 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

### **House Bill No. 135 by Representative Turner**

Representative Turner offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 135, which authorizes correctional facilities to employ medication attendants certified by the Louisiana Department of Health. Without objection, action on House Bill No. 135 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Miller, Berault, Butler, Chenevert, Crews, Dickerson, Echols, Egan, Fisher, Hughes, McMahan, Myers, Selders, Stagni, and Turner voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 3 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

### **House Bill No. 193 by Representative Turner**

Representative Turner presented House Bill No. 193, which authorizes the transfer of a prescription or prescription information for controlled substances between pharmacies in conformance with federal regulations.

Joe Fontenot, Louisiana Board of Pharmacy, 3388 Brentwood Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70809, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 193.

Representative Turner offered a motion to report House Bill No. 193 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 193 was reported favorably by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Miller, Berault, Butler, Chenevert, Crews, Dickerson, Echols, Egan, Fisher, Hughes, McMahan, Myers, Selders, Stagni, and Turner voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 6 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

**House Bill No. 93 by Representative Willard**

Representative Willard presented House Bill No. 93, which provides relative to access to birth certificates.

Anthony Critelli-O'Donnell, Louisiana Center for Children's Rights, 1365 St. Anthony Street, New Orleans, LA 70116, spoke in support of House Bill No. 93.

Mary Beth Hughes, Louisiana Association of Business and Industry, 500 Main Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70801, spoke in support of House Bill No. 93.

Representative Hughes offered a motion to report House Bill No. 93 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 93 was reported favorably by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Miller, Berault, Butler, Chenevert, Crews, Dickerson, Echols, Egan, Fisher, Hughes, McMahan, Myers, Selders, Stagni, and Turner voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 3 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

**House Bill No. 702 by Representative Willard**

Representative Willard presented House Bill No. 702, which provides for Medicaid coverage and support for doula services.

Frankie Robertson, March of Dimes, 14335 Thorn Briar Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70817, spoke in support of House Bill No. 702.

Representative Miller offered technical amendments. Representative Miller offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Miller, Berault, Butler, Chenevert, Crews, Dickerson, Echols, Egan, Fisher, Hughes, Myers, Selders, and Stagni voted yea.

Representative Miller offered amendments to:

- (1) Change the requirements for Medicaid coverage from 3 prenatal visits to 5.
- (2) Add the performance of Cesarean deliveries to the requirement for doula assistance and attendance during labor and childbirth.
- (3) Remove the requirement for a healthcare facility to determine a prospective enrollee's eligibility for coverage.

- (4) Insert language that requires a determination of the individual's pregnancy or postpartum status.
- (5) Require doula care to be eligible for coverage and meet minimum standards outside of the healthcare facility.

Representative Miller offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Miller, Berault, Butler, Chenevert, Crews, Dickerson, Echols, Egan, Fisher, Hughes, Myers, Selders, and Stagni voted yea.

*Representative Butler in the chair.*

Victoria Williams, Birthmark Doula Collective, 14335 Thorn Briar Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70817, spoke in support of House Bill No. 702.

*Representative Miller in the chair.*

Will Hall, Louisiana Baptist Office of Public Policy, 1250 MacArthur Drive, Alexandria, LA 71303, submitted a red card in opposition to House Bill No. 702. However, Dr. Hall announced a change of mind following the adoption of the amendments and spoke in support of House Bill No. 702.

Catherine Auzenne-Alfred, 279 Brennan Street, Opelousas, LA 70570, submitted a red card in opposition to House Bill No. 702. However, Ms. Auzenne-Alfred announced a change of mind following the adoption of the amendments and spoke in support of House Bill No. 702.

Representative Stagni offered a motion to report House Bill No. 702 with amendments, to which Representative Crews objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and House Bill No. 702 was reported with amendments by a vote of 13 yeas and 2 nays. Representatives Miller, Berault, Butler, Chenevert, Dickerson, Echols, Fisher, Hughes, McMahan, Myers, Selders, Stagni, and Turner voted yea. Representatives Crews and Egan voted nay.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 18 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

### **House Bill No. 489 by Representative Hughes**

Representative Hughes presented House Bill No. 489, which provides relative to Medicaid services for maternal and infant health.

Representative Hughes offered technical amendments. Representative Hughes offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 14

yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Miller, Berault, Butler, Chenevert, Crews, Dickerson, Echols, Egan, Hughes, McMahan, Myers, Selders, Stagni, and Turner voted yea.

Representative Hughes offered amendments to remove the requirement for a healthcare facility to determine a prospective enrollee's eligibility for coverage. Representative Hughes offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Miller, Berault, Chenevert, Crews, Dickerson, Echols, Egan, Hughes, McMahan, Myers, Selders, Stagni, and Turner voted yea.

Ahynel Burkes, Louisiana State Nurses Association, 543 Spanish Town Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke in support of House Bill No. 489 and provided a handout, Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records.

Frankie Robertson, March of Dimes, 14335 Thorn Briar Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70817, spoke in support of House Bill No. 489.

Elizabeth Licata, 742 Newman Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70121, spoke in support of House Bill No. 489.

Omotola Uwaifo, 393 Starling Drive, Slidell, LA 70461, spoke in support of House Bill No. 489.

Sophia Rosenblatt, Saul's Light, 1229 St. Anthony Street, New Orleans, LA 70116, spoke in support of House Bill No. 489.

Representative Selders offered a motion to report House Bill No. 489 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 489 was reported with amendments by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Miller, Berault, Butler, Chenevert, Crews, Dickerson, Echols, Egan, Fisher, Hughes, McMahan, Myers, Selders, Stagni, and Turner voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 27 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 489 pursuant to House Rule 14.33.

#### **House Bill No. 417 by Representative Lyons**

Representative Lyons presented House Bill No. 417, which provides relative to NEMT providers.

Representative Stagni offered amendments to:

- (1) Change references from "transportation company" to "transportation broker".

- (2) Add a stipulation for the evaluation required by proposed law to be conducted by way of a public hearing before the House and Senate committees on health and welfare.
- (3) Detail the policies and provisions that shall be evaluated in accordance with proposed law.
- (4) Provide that each managed care organization shall reserve the right to manage its own NEMT compliance.
- (5) Make technical corrections.

Representative Miller offered a substitute motion to adopt proposed amendments Nos. 1 through 5. Representative Miller withdrew his substitute motion to adopt proposed amendments Nos. 1 through 5. No vote was taken.

Representative Stagni offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Miller, Berault, Butler, Chenevert, Dickerson, Echols, Egan, Fisher, Hughes, McMahan, Myers, Selders, Stagni, and Turner voted yea.

Kolynda Parker, LDH, 628 North Fourth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only House Bill No. 417.

Nic Walts, MediTrans, 309 Settlers Trace Boulevard, #200, Lafayette, LA 70508, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 417.

Representative Stagni offered a motion to report House Bill No. 417 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 417 was reported with amendments by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Miller, Berault, Butler, Chenevert, Crews, Dickerson, Echols, Egan, Fisher, Hughes, McMahan, Myers, Selders, Stagni, and Turner voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 12 in support and 1 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

### **House Bill No. 80 by Representative Echols**

Representative Echols presented House Bill No. 80, which authorizes transportation network companies to provide nonemergency medical transportation services through the state Medicaid program.

Derrius Taylor, Destination Transportation, 1905 Van Arpel Drive, LaPlace, LA 70068, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 80.

Becky Bergeron, Pointe Coupee Council on Aging, 2112 False River Drive, New Roads, LA 70760, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 80.

Michael Mitchell, Louisiana Nonemergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) Providers, 5826 Johnston Street, Lafayette, LA 70503, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 80.

Cleveland Auzenne, IRide, 279 Brennan Street, Opelousas, LA 70570, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 80.

Mike Rome, Louisiana Council on Aging, 203 South Elm Street, Tallulah, LA 71282, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 80.

Ivy Jacobs, Region 7, 8169 Myrtlewood Drive, Greenwood, LA 71033, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 80.

Catherine Auzenne-Alfred, 279 Brennan Street, Opelousas, LA 70570, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 80.

Tony Crawford, Crawford Transit, 2422 Wisteria Street, New Orleans, LA 70122, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 80.

Leanne Heisser Jackson, 404 Creekside Court, Covington, LA 70435, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 80.

Fatimah Sylvan, NEMT, 4721 Eastview Drive, New Orleans, LA 70126, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 80.

Cheryel Montgomery, Blaizin Transportation LLC, 1303 Balsam Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70807, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 80.

Lawrence C. Sylvan, NEMT, 4721 Eastview Drive, New Orleans, LA 70126, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 80.

David Cefalu, Delucia Insurance Agency, 3908 Jean Lafitte Parkway, Chalmette, LA 70043, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 80.

Kolynda Parker, LDH, 628 North Fourth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 80.

Brandon Bueche, LDH, 628 North Fourth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 80.



Kim Humbles, LDH, 628 North Fourth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 80.

Representative Butler offered amendments to:

- (1) Require consistency between state law and the requirements established in the Medicaid Services Manual.
- (2) Clarify that riders should be connected to drivers by utilizing a Medicaid NEMT broker.
- (3) Provide that any transportation network company licensed by the Dept. of Transportation and Development that contracts with a transportation broker may facilitate NEMT services at any time on or after the effective date of proposed law and after the adoption of the rules.
- (4) Remove the provision that does not require an affiliate driver to enroll as an NEMT provider in the state Medicaid program.
- (5) Make technical corrections.

Representative Butler offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Miller, Berault, Butler, Chenevert, Dickerson, Echols, Egan, Fisher, Hughes, McMahan, Selders, and Stagni voted yea.

Representative Hughes offered amendments to require a qualified transportation network company or its broker that wants to provide NEMT services to Medicaid enrollees to submit the driver's valid license and registration prior to authorizing the drivers to provide NEMT services and to make technical corrections. Representative Hughes offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Miller, Berault, Butler, Chenevert, Dickerson, Echols, Egan, Fisher, Hughes, McMahan, Selders, and Stagni voted yea.

Representative Echols offered a motion to report House Bill No. 80 with amendments, to which Representative Selders objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and House Bill No. 80 was reported with amendments by a vote of 9 yeas and 3 nays. Representatives Berault, Butler, Chenevert, Dickerson, Echols, Egan, Hughes, McMahan, and Stagni voted yea. Representatives Miller, Fisher, and Selders voted nay.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 5 in support and 30 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 80 pursuant to House Rule 14.33.

**IV. OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

**V. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

Representative Hughes offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Miller, Berault, Butler, Chenevert, Dickerson, Echols, Egan, Fisher, Hughes, McMahan, Selders, and Stagni voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Dustin Miller  
House Committee on Health and Welfare

Date adopted: