

Office of the Governor
State of Louisiana

JOHN BEL EDWARDS
GOVERNOR



P.O. Box 94004
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70804-9004
(225) 342-7015
GOV.LA.GOV

June 17, 2022

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Honorable Clay J. Schexnayder
Speaker of the House
Louisiana House of Representatives
Post Office Box 94062
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9062

RE: Veto of House Bill 99 of the 2022 Regular Session

Dear Speaker Schexnayder:

Please allow this letter to inform you that I have vetoed House Bill 99 of the 2022 Regular Session.

Despite the author's earnest intent, this bill is antithetical to the 2017 Justice Reinvestment effort, passed by the legislature with strong bipartisan support. This effort arose from the Louisiana Justice Reinvestment Task Force, a bipartisan group comprised of law enforcement, court practitioners, community members, and legislators. The 2017 reforms focused on non-violent and non-sex offenses in an effort to change Louisiana's status as the state with the highest incarceration rate in the country. Just five years in, these changes are working. Through June of 2021, the state has saved approximately \$114.8 million in taxpayer dollars resulting in significant reinvestments in juvenile justice programs, victim's services, and other initiatives designed to reduce recidivism.

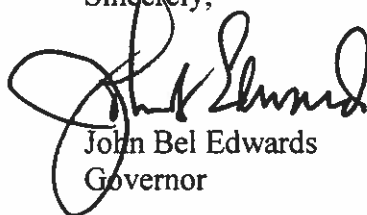
House Bill 99 would establish the crime of resisting a police officer with force or violence as a new crime of violence, thereby changing the calculation for earning good time for some offenders, making it more difficult for early release, no matter the severity of the offense, the threshold of which only requires a threat of force. There are, however, a number of crimes against law enforcement officers that are designated as crimes of violence currently, including aggravated assault on a peace officer, disarming of a peace officer, aggravated flight from an officer, and battery of a police officer, that are available to be used in prosecution for offenses committed against law enforcement.

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I do appreciate all of the men and women of law enforcement who put their lives on the line every day to keep our state safe, however the people of this state are not served, nor are they made more safe, by imposing longer prison sentences for this particular crime.

Enclosed is the vetoed version of House Bill 99.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Bel Edwards". The signature is stylized with large, sweeping loops and a prominent initial "J".

John Bel Edwards
Governor

enclosure

cc: Honorable Patrick Page Cortez
Louisiana Senate President