

2015 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 200

BY REPRESENTATIVE WESLEY BISHOP

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Board of Regents, in consultation with the public postsecondary education management boards, to review and consider revising the Master Plan for Postsecondary Education relative to meeting the plan's goal of increasing educational attainment.

WHEREAS, Article VIII, Section 5(D) of the Constitution of Louisiana provides for the powers, duties, and responsibilities of the Board of Regents, including the requirement that the board formulate and make timely revision of a master plan for postsecondary education; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Regents, through the development and implementation of the Master Plan for Postsecondary Education: 2011, advanced its vision for the future of postsecondary education by adopting several broad goals, one of which is increasing the educational attainment of the state's adult population to reach the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) states' average by 2025; and

WHEREAS, according to the third annual review of the master plan, which the Board of Regents published in August of 2014, the annual number of graduates is ultimately the most important measure of the state's progress toward the goal of reaching this average, and to reach this educational attainment goal by 2025, the state needs to increase its number of graduates significantly; and

WHEREAS, according to a 2013 American Community Survey, United States Census figures show that only 29.6% of Louisiana's 2.4 million adults ages twenty-five to sixty-four hold a two-year or four-year college degree, and the state's rate of postsecondary educational attainment is well below the national average of 40%; and

WHEREAS, research shows that attainment rates across the country vary significantly based on race and ethnicity, geography, and other factors; while overall attainment is increasing, the gaps in attainment linked to race and ethnicity are not narrowing significantly and deserve special scrutiny; and

WHEREAS, successfully educating veterans and returning adults would assist the state of Louisiana in meeting its goal of increasing educational attainment; and

WHEREAS, the Lumina Foundation, like the Board of Regents, considers increasing educational attainment a major priority; the foundation is an independent, private foundation committed to increasing the proportion of Americans with high-quality degrees, certificates, and other credentials to 60% by 2025, known as "Goal 2025"; this goal is a national priority because postsecondary education is a prerequisite to success in a knowledge-based society and economy; and

WHEREAS, the Lumina Foundation, while acknowledging that there are obstacles, asserts that America can increase educational attainment with a three-pronged approach: improving student enrollment, persistence, and completion, particularly by underrepresented students; supporting adults' efforts to return to college; and recognizing all forms of high-quality postsecondary credentials; and

WHEREAS, the legislature recognizes the importance of increasing postsecondary educational attainment and closing achievement gaps in Louisiana.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby request the Board of Regents, in consultation with the public postsecondary education management boards, to review and consider revising the Master Plan for Postsecondary Education relative to meeting the plan's goal of increasing educational attainment.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in conducting such review and possible revision, the board should focus on improving student enrollment, persistence, and completion, particularly by underrepresented students, including minorities, returning adults, and veterans.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the chairman of the Board of Regents and the commissioner of higher education.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE