

2018 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 42

BY REPRESENTATIVE BARRAS

COMMENDATIONS: Recognizes the forty-fourth anniversary of the ratification of the Constitution of Louisiana of 1974 and commends the delegates for their extraordinary public service to the state

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To recognize the forty-fourth anniversary of the ratification of the Constitution of Louisiana
3 of 1974 and to commend the delegates of the Constitutional Convention of 1973 for
4 their extraordinary public service to the state of Louisiana.

5 WHEREAS, it is appropriate to recognize the forty-fourth anniversary of the
6 ratification of the Constitution of Louisiana of 1974 and to commend the delegates of the
7 Constitutional Convention of 1973 upon the successful confection of a new constitution, a
8 collaborative effort of representative democracy considered to be one of the most significant
9 achievements in Louisiana's history during the twentieth century; and

10 WHEREAS, the Constitution of Louisiana of 1974 lies at the epicenter of the
11 infrastructure of state government as a definitive legal instrument that clearly delineates the
12 rights of individuals, describes the distribution of powers among state officials and local
13 governments, and establishes both state and local civil service systems; and

14 WHEREAS, the delegates of the Constitutional Convention of 1973 drafted the
15 eleventh version of the state's constitution since statehood in 1812; it had previously been
16 reworked in 1845, 1852, 1861, 1864, 1868, 1879, 1898, 1913, and 1921; and

17 WHEREAS, the predecessor to the Constitution of Louisiana of 1974, the
18 Constitution of Louisiana of 1921, had been amended more than five hundred times to
19 become a conflicted legal quagmire, the second most lengthy of all state constitutions,

1 containing more than two hundred fifty-five thousand words, a large number of outside
2 references, and an excessive amount of detail; and

3 WHEREAS, lawmakers and government watch-dog organizations such as the Public
4 Affairs Research Council raised objections to the antiquated 1921 Constitution as a
5 hindrance to economic growth and flexibility within state and local governments; and

6 WHEREAS, in 1971, gubernatorial candidate, Congressman Edwin W. Edwards, ran
7 on a campaign plank to implement a modern constitution and to streamline government;
8 when elected, he was stymied in his efforts to reorganize the executive branch due to the
9 inflexibility of the 1921 Constitution; and

10 WHEREAS, Act No. 2 of the 1972 Regular Session (House Bill No. 181 by
11 Representative McLeod and others) was the legislative instrument used to bring about
12 change through the creation of the Constitutional Convention of 1973, known as CC73, a
13 collective of one hundred five delegates elected by popular vote from existing districts of
14 the Louisiana House of Representatives and twenty-seven delegates appointed by the
15 governor; and

16 WHEREAS, the CC73 delegates came from all corners of the state; they represented
17 a cross-section of state demographics, as the greatest generation whose strength of character
18 was forged by the global conflict of World War II, as activists of the "New South" who were
19 the emerging national voice for minorities and women, and as a new generation of political
20 novices taking their first steps in public service; Philip Bergeron was the youngest elected
21 delegate at eighteen years of age; and

22 WHEREAS, the convention convened on January 5, 1973; the roll call of elected
23 delegates in order beginning with District One was: Jasper K. Smith, Alphonse Jackson, Jr.,
24 Wellborn Jack, V.C. Shannon, Tom Stagg, Frank Fulco, Dr. Emmett Asseff, Ford E. Stinson,
25 Charles "Buddy" Roemer, R. Harmon Drew, Bill P. Grier, Kenneth Dale Kilpatrick, E.L.
26 "Bubba" Henry, Paul David Ginn, Shady Wall, Judge James L. "Jim" Dennis, Thomas W.
27 Leigh, R.M. Elkins, J.A. "Jim" McDaniel, Lantz Womack, Jim Brown, Terry R. Reeves,
28 Donald G. Kelly, H.M. "Mutt" Fowler, Richard S. Thompson, Chris J. Roy, Charles Slay,
29 Lynn Perkins, Cecil R. Blair, F.E. "Pete" Hernandez, Dr. J.E. Stephenson, Errol D.
30 Deshotels, A.J. Planchard, Dr. Gerald N. Weiss, Mack Abraham, Conway LeBleu, Greg

1 Arnette, Jr., Clyde Fontenot, Walter J. Champagne, Jr., Lawrence B. Sandoz, Jr., I. Jackson
2 Burson, Jr., Ralph L. Cowen, Pat Juneau, Heloise C. Corne, E.J. Chatelain, J. Burton Willis,
3 G. Hardee, Jr., Minos H. Armentor, Perry Segura, F.D. "Dan" Winchester, Anthony J.
4 Guarisco, Jr., Stanwood R. Duval, Jr., Charles A. Badeaux, Donald T. Bollinger, Walter I.
5 Lanier, Jr., Eual J. Landry, Sr., Gordon J. Martin, N.E. Carmouche, Louis J. Lambert, Jr.,
6 Jessel M. Ourso, Sr., Herman J. "Monday" Lowe, Richard H. Kilbourne, George Dewey
7 Hayes, Gary O'Neill, Harvey W. Cannon, Jr., Louis "Woody" Jenkins, Mary E. Wisham,
8 J.D. De Blieux, Robert J. Aertker, R. Gordon Kean, Jr., Calvin C. Fayard, Jr., Joseph "Joe"
9 E. Anzalone, Jr., Autley B. Newton, James T. "Jim" Burns, B. B. "Sixty" Rayburn, Alvin D.
10 Singletary, Edward J. "Eddie" D'Gerolamo, Wendell H. Gauthier, the Reverend James L.
11 Stovall, Joseph A. Conino, David Conroy, Harold J. Toca, John A. Alario, Jr., Dr. Frank J.
12 Ullo, Joseph F. Toomy, Matthew R. Sutherland, Earl J. Schmitt, Jr., Novyse E. Soniat, Moise
13 W. Dennery, Thomas A. Casey, Louis Landrum, Sr., Edward F. LeBreton, Jr., the Reverend
14 Avery C. Alexander, Anthony J. Vesich, Jr., Claude Mauberret, Jr., James G. Derbes,
15 Thomas A. Velazquez, Joseph I. Giarrusso, Sr., Louis G. Riecke, Sr., Philip O. Bergeron,
16 Johnny Jackson, Jr., George Ethel Warren, Elmer R. Tapper, Samuel B. Nunez, Jr., and
17 Chalin Perez; and

18 WHEREAS, delegates appointed by the governor to represent particular interests
19 included Edward N. Lennox, industry; Gordon Flory, labor; Horace C. Robinson, education;
20 Anthony M. Rachal, Jr., civil service; John L. "Jack" Avant, wildlife and conservation; Frank
21 M. Edwards, Jr., law enforcement; Albert Tate, Jr., judiciary; Ruth Miller, professions; Hilda
22 Brien, consumers; Robert J. Munson, agriculture; Max N. Tobias, Jr., youth; and Dorothy
23 Mae Taylor, racial minorities; and

24 WHEREAS, at-large delegates appointed by the governor for extraordinary expertise
25 in law and local governmental affairs included Tom Colten, Ambroise H. Landry, Pegram
26 J. Mire, Clyde F. Bel, Sr., Mary Zervigon, Joe N. Silverberg, John R. Thistlethwaite,
27 Lawrence A. Chehardy, Kendall Vick, Judy Dunlap, J. K. Haynes, Richard P. Guidry,
28 J. Kenneth Leithman, Risley C. Triche, and Camille F. Gravel, Jr.; and

29 WHEREAS, delegates appointed to fulfill unexpired terms were Dean Louis Berry,
30 Emile Comar, Jr., Paul H. Goldman, R.W. "Buzzy" Graham, Norman "Pete" Heine, Louis

1 M. Jones, Corrine Maybruce, James W. Morris, Robert G. Pugh, Charles Wattigny, Carolyn
2 Guedry Badeaux, and Paula Sue Kilpatrick; and

3 WHEREAS, CC73 was a unicameral body comprised of one hundred thirty-two
4 delegates from all walks of life, including some of the best legal minds of the time; it was
5 a self-governing body that employed rules of procedure adopted by the convention, a
6 committee system, compromise and good humor, transparency of process with open debate,
7 news media access, and community involvement with public meetings held across the state
8 to gather public opinion and a sense of popular needs and wants, all of which advanced the
9 acceptance of a new constitution; and

10 WHEREAS, CC73 was reflective of the changing face of Louisiana's political scene;
11 among those involved were future leaders that included a governor, house clerk, senate
12 secretary, judges, mayors, outstanding attorneys-at-law, and future legislators, such as the
13 African American delegates who were the predecessors of an alliance that would become
14 the Legislative Black Caucus; there were young movers and shakers who were the vanguard
15 of the Young Turks of the 1970s in the Louisiana House of Representatives, and future state
16 officials who would contribute immeasurably to the executive, legislative, and judicial
17 branches of state and local government; and

18 WHEREAS, CC73 was a learning process that created a familiarity between
19 delegates and constituents who were often separated by distance and biased by cultural
20 stereotypes; and

21 WHEREAS, at times, the atmosphere of CC73 was highly contested, but mostly
22 congenial, and strong friendships were forged that have lasted over four decades; and

23 WHEREAS, the convention adjourned on January 19, 1974, having adopted a
24 proposed draft constitution; and

25 WHEREAS, the document was attested to with the signatures of its framers,
26 including chairman of the convention, E.L. "Bubba" Henry; vice chairmen, Ruth L. Miller,
27 Thomas A. Casey, the Reverend Avery C. Alexander, and Chris J. Roy; treasurer, Herman
28 J. "Monday" Lowe; and the remaining convention delegates, which included among its
29 number, Senate President John A. Alario, Jr., then a member of the House of
30 Representatives; and

1 WHEREAS, CC73 was a great success; the delegation drafted a constitutional
2 blueprint for a basic form of state government that was laden with protections for the
3 individual; championed the tenets of equal opportunity, fair labor relations, and small
4 business interests; and expanded voter participation; and

5 WHEREAS, the draft constitution was submitted to and ratified by the people at a
6 special election held on April 20, 1974; by its own terms, the new constitution became
7 effective at midnight on December 31, 1974; and

8 WHEREAS, with their approach of change through positive deliberation, the
9 delegates of CC73 left a remarkable legacy of genuine public service to the citizenry of
10 Louisiana who in turn owe a great debt to these framers of the new constitution as their
11 contributions have made Louisiana a better and more prosperous state in which to live.

12 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the
13 Legislature of Louisiana does hereby recognize the forty-fourth anniversary of the
14 ratification of the Constitution of Louisiana of 1974 and commend the delegates of the
15 Constitutional Convention of 1973 for their extraordinary public service to the state of
16 Louisiana.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HR 42 Original

2018 Regular Session

Barras

Recognizes the 44th anniversary of the ratification of the Constitution of Louisiana of 1974 and commends the delegates of the Constitutional Convention of 1973 for their extraordinary public service to the state of Louisiana.