SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 22
BY SENATOR BARROW

BESE. Requests BESE to suspend statewide standardized assessments for the 2019-2020 school year due to COVID-19.

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
To urge and request the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to suspend all statewide assessments for the 2019-2020 school year due to the imminent threat posed to the citizens of Louisiana by COVID-19.

WHEREAS, a novel coronavirus named "coronavirus disease 2019", commonly referred to as COVID-19, was first detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China, in December 2019; and

WHEREAS, the coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are common in people and many different animal species; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a respiratory illness that has a broad range of symptoms from mild, flu-like symptoms to severe breathing difficulties that can result in death; and

WHEREAS, the first confirmed instance of person-to-person spread of the virus in the United States was recorded on January 30, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on that same day the World Health Organization declared the outbreak "a public health emergency of international concern"; and

WHEREAS, the rapid spread of COVID-19 led the World Health Organization to upgrade its declaration to a "global pandemic" on March 11; and

WHEREAS, the first presumptive positive case of COVID-19 in Louisiana occurred
on March 9, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the governor of Louisiana declared a public health emergency on March 11, 2020, as a result of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, at present there is no vaccine to protect against COVID-19 and there is a high probability of widespread exposure and the disease poses an imminent threat to Louisiana citizens; and

WHEREAS, on March 12, 2020, it was reported that more than 1.3 million K-12 students in the United States have been impacted by school closures related to COVID-19 and the number is expected to increase; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana’s mandated annual statewide assessments are scheduled to start in the next few weeks; and

WHEREAS, student anxiety over the virus and unrest caused by school closures will likely negatively impact student test performance; and

WHEREAS, results from these assessments have a great impact on students, teachers, schools, and districts; and

WHEREAS, the health of Louisiana’s students, teachers, and other school employees, and not test results, should be of the utmost concern.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to suspend all statewide assessments for the 2019-2020 school year due to the imminent threat posed to the citizens of Louisiana by COVID-19.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the president of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Cheryl Serrett.

DIGEST
SCR 22 Original 2020 Regular Session Barrow

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