

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 81

BY SENATOR THOMPSON

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Board of Regents to study the feasibility of establishing a program at certain public colleges and universities that will allow students in colleges of education to earn college credit for providing tutoring and study skills assistance to students in elementary and secondary schools situated in poverty stricken areas of the state where such services are not readily available.

WHEREAS, improving academic outcomes and affording children the opportunity to reach their potential and succeed in society is a responsibility of government and each educational institution, and students who do not develop the minimum foundation of skills necessary to learn are at risk of dropping out of school and being unemployed or underemployed as adults; and

WHEREAS, a coordinated program to improve student achievement in the most impoverished areas of Louisiana is a means through which the state might increase the likelihood of student academic success, reduce the instances of drop outs, and ultimately lift our poor out of poverty; and

WHEREAS, according to statistics reported by the United States Census Bureau in 2008, more than seventeen and a half percent of Louisiana's population lives below the poverty level, compared to the national average of approximately thirteen percent; and

WHEREAS, the *2009 Kids Count Data Book on Louisiana's Children* indicates that a family's income has a tremendous impact on a child's overall well-being, and research shows that "experiencing poverty during early childhood is closely correlated with poorer educational outcomes in later years"; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana has one of the highest rates of child poverty in the country, second only to Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, although child poverty rates vary widely across Louisiana, the parishes with the highest poverty rates are located in the northeastern part of the state, including the parishes of East Carroll (fifty-six percent), Morehouse (fifty-one percent), Tensas (fifty percent), Madison (forty-nine percent), Franklin (forty-six percent), and Concordia (forty-five percent); and

WHEREAS, the academic achievement of the neediest children in the state may be positively impacted by a tutoring program which utilizes future teachers enrolled in colleges of education within universities located in areas of the state where impoverished children do not have access to such tutoring services; and

WHEREAS, providing such additional education support opportunities will not only offer valuable outreach to the community but should also benefit students by improving their understanding of course material and test scores, as well as improving personal motivation and attitudes toward school work; and

WHEREAS, future teachers will also benefit through participation in such a program by gaining practical experience in individualized instruction, including experience with lesson planning, communication, and classroom management prior to entering student teaching in a classroom setting; and

WHEREAS, access to equitable educational opportunities for all children is a valid predictor of future success and such access will enable at-risk students to benefit from these opportunities by leaving poverty behind to become productive workers and contributing members of society.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Board of Regents to study the feasibility of establishing a program at certain public colleges and universities that will allow students in colleges of education to earn college credit for providing tutoring and study skills assistance to students in elementary and secondary schools situated in poverty stricken areas of the state where such services are not readily available.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana requests the Board of Regents to submit a written report of its findings and recommendations, together with any specific proposals for legislation, to the Senate

**SR NO. 81**

**ENROLLED**

Committee on Education, not later than sixty days prior to the beginning of the 2011 Regular Session of the Legislature.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the commissioner of higher education.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE