

Regular Session, 2011

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 78

BY REPRESENTATIVES SCHRODER, BARRAS, BURFORD, CARMODY, CARTER, CHAMPAGNE, CHANEY, DANAHAY, HARRISON, HENRY, HOFFMANN, LIGI, LORUSSO, NOWLIN, PEARSON, PUGH, RICHARD, SEABAUGH, AND TALBOT

PUBLIC BUILDINGS/GROUNDS: Urges and requests the Board of Regents to study alternative uses of underutilized facilities at public postsecondary education institutions

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the Board of Regents to study alternative uses of underutilized facilities  
3 at public postsecondary education institutions.

4 WHEREAS, statistical data maintained by the Board of Regents suggest that  
5 facilities at Louisiana public postsecondary institutions are underutilized; and

6 WHEREAS, in 2008, the totality of space in the state's postsecondary education  
7 institutions accommodated 148,300 full-time students, but standards developed by the  
8 Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education indicated that 211,757 students could  
9 easily be accommodated in existing facility space; and

10 WHEREAS, based on these figures, these institutions can accommodate an additional  
11 63,000 students within existing facility space, but reality is that enrollment numbers are  
12 trending downward; and

13 WHEREAS, empty space is not only costly but a missed opportunity to generate  
14 income, encourage economic development, and provide an additional resource to both public  
15 and private entities within the community; and

16 WHEREAS, an article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, September 15, 2010,  
17 entitled "European Universities Look for Alternative Revenue Streams" suggests that  
18 alternative sources of financing, such as making alternative use of university infrastructure,  
19 can result in a higher level of financial autonomy at an institution; and

1           WHEREAS, state law authorizes alternative use of university facilities, which law  
2 provides:

3           R.S. 17:3353. Cooperation with public agencies

4           A. Each board may enter into contracts and agreements with any public  
5 agency for the establishment of state or other public offices on the property and in  
6 the buildings of the university. It also can enter into contracts and agreements for  
7 joint construction, equipment, maintenance and financing of such buildings, and  
8 enter into contracts and agreements for the joint financing, supervision and conduct  
9 of cooperative enterprises and undertakings.

10          B. Any public agency is authorized to enter into contracts and agreements  
11 with any board for the purposes mentioned in this Section.

12          WHEREAS, the legislature recognizes that consideration must be given for peak  
13 class demand times and that there is a need to utilize postsecondary facilities in a manner  
14 that does not conflict with the mission of higher education nor jeopardize the health or safety  
15 of its students and faculties and, as such, considers the following as examples of possible  
16 appropriate uses of underutilized university infrastructure; and

17          WHEREAS, community and technical colleges expect an increase in enrollment as  
18 the result of expected tuition and fee increases as well as stricter academic standards at four-  
19 year institutions and, in response to House Resolution No. 200 of the 2010 Regular Session  
20 of the Legislature, the Board of Regents concluded, in part, that "classroom overcrowding  
21 at community colleges may be alleviated through the use of classroom space at proximate  
22 four-year institutions... [and] the Board of Regents will continue to analyze space utilizations  
23 to promote facility sharing and to seek to address shortcomings in the current data collection  
24 system"; and

25          WHEREAS, the Louisiana Department of Economic Development which utilizes  
26 various incentives and programs to encourage businesses to expand or relocate to Louisiana,  
27 including the Mega-Project Development Fund, various tax credits and exemptions, tax  
28 abatements, and workforce recruitment, may very well be interested in exploring the use of  
29 public postsecondary education facilities as yet another incentive to encourage economic  
30 development in this state; and

1           WHEREAS, the Louisiana Business & Technology Center, E.J. Ourso College of  
2 Business, and other like institutions, which endeavor to enhance economic development in  
3 Louisiana through the support of existing small businesses and the development of new  
4 businesses, may also be interested in utilizing otherwise underutilized postsecondary  
5 education facilities in further support of their missions; and

6           WHEREAS, the office of facility planning and control, division of administration,  
7 which is responsible for providing appropriate owned or leased facilities to house the  
8 operations of state government, may be able to further one of its objectives of housing state  
9 agencies in a cost-effective manner by entering into cooperative agreements with public  
10 postsecondary institutions for the use of otherwise underutilized facilities; and

11           WHEREAS, the Louisiana Association of Nonprofit Organizations (LANO), whose  
12 mission is to strengthen, promote, and build the capacity of nonprofits through various  
13 means, including strategic collaboration, may be interested in collaborating with  
14 postsecondary education boards for use of institution facilities; and

15           WHEREAS, these are but a few examples of possible symbiotic relationships  
16 between public institutions of higher education, government, and the community.

17           THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby  
18 urge and request the Board of Regents to continue to address shortcomings in the data  
19 collection system necessary to identify underutilized facilities at public postsecondary  
20 education institutions, to continue to study the availability of underutilized facilities, to  
21 consider alternative and creative uses of underutilized facilities, and to engage in discussions  
22 with various entities with whom collaborative efforts can result in the use of such facilities  
23 in a manner that is fiscally or socially responsible, and to submit a written report of its  
24 findings and conclusions, including any recommendations for legislation relative to the  
25 issue, to the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education not  
26 later than sixty days prior to the beginning of the 2012 Regular Session of the Legislature  
27 of Louisiana.

28           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the  
29 chairman of the Board of Regents, the commissioner of higher education, the chairman of  
30 the Board of Supervisors of Community and Technical Colleges, the secretary of the

- 1 Department of Economic Development, the executive director of the Louisiana Business &
  - 2 Technology Center, E.J. Ourso College of Business, the director of the office of facility
  - 3 planning and control, division of administration, and the president of the Louisiana
  - 4 Association of Nonprofit Organizations.
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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)]

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Schroder

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