

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 176

BY SENATOR BISHOP

A RESOLUTION

To commend and congratulate Dr. Victor Ukpolo for his leadership and service as Chancellor of Southern University at New Orleans.

WHEREAS, Dr. Victor Ukpolo, who has served as Chancellor of Southern University at New Orleans (SUNO) for ten years, will resign that position effective June 30, 2016; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Ukpolo, formerly the Southern University System's Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs, previously served as Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs at California State University in Los Angeles and Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs/Special Assistant to the Chancellor for Academic Research for the Tennessee Board of Regents, after starting his career as an Assistant Professor of Economics at Austin Peay State University, where he also held an administrative post as Executive Assistant to the President; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Ukpolo came to America from Nigeria forty-four years ago as a young man with \$200 in his pocket and worked his way up from a dishwasher to become chancellor; and

WHEREAS, after he steps down as chancellor, Dr. Ukpolo plans to return to the classroom to teach at SUNO before eventually returning to Nigeria, as the patriarch of his family, to give back to his homeland; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Ukpolo was appointed Chancellor on January 6, 2006, and led SUNO during a critical time in the university's history, rebuilding the campus that was submerged in flood waters after hurricanes Katrina and Rita; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure, the university built its first-ever housing complex, an Information Technology Center, a new College of Business & Public Administration Building, and a Small Business Incubator on the newly developed Lake Campus; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Ukpolo also oversaw the renovations of the University Center, the Leonard S. Washington Memorial Library and the first floor of the Bashful Administration Building, and in addition, four new buildings are slated to be constructed: the Education

Building, the Natural Sciences Building, the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Building, and the Millie M. Charles School of Social Work, with the university breaking ground on the new Social Work building in November 2015; and

WHEREAS, SUNO experienced impressive student population growth under Dr. Ukpolo's leadership, immediately after Hurricane Katrina, he launched an aggressive marketing and reorganization campaign, which included the introduction of four innovative online programs to attract displaced students; and

WHEREAS, despite projections that only 1,200 to 1,500 of the 3,600 students enrolled before the storm would return, more than 2,100 students came back to continue their education on the new Lake Campus in trailers supplied by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers; and

WHEREAS, with enrollment climbing faster than any other four-year institution in Louisiana, SUNO not only moved back to its original location, known as the Park Campus, in the winter of 2008, but is also experienced unprecedented growth; and

WHEREAS, looking toward future generations, Dr. Ukpolo established an innovative dual enrollment program to allow qualified high school students to earn college credits at the university and he also continues to support the Honoré Center for Undergraduate Achievement, created to reverse the trend of fewer African American males graduating from college, while increasing the number of male-certified classroom teachers in urban settings; and

WHEREAS, programs such as these demonstrate Dr. Ukpolo's care, commitment and concern for SUNO's students, many who, like him, are the first in their families to attend.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend and congratulate Dr. Victor Ukpolo for his leadership and service as Chancellor of Southern University at New Orleans; does hereby record for posterity his accomplishments; and does hereby extend best wishes on his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Dr. Victor Ukpolo.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE