

2018 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 43

BY SENATOR ALARIO

COMMENDATIONS. Recognizes the 45th anniversary of the Constitutional Convention of 1973 and commends the framers of the resulting Louisiana Constitution for their extraordinary public service to the state.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To recognize the forty-fifth anniversary of the Constitutional Convention of 1973 and to
3 commend the framers of the resulting Louisiana Constitution for their extraordinary
4 public service to the state of Louisiana.

5 WHEREAS, the Legislature of Louisiana duly recognizes 2018 as the forty-fifth
6 anniversary of the Constitutional Convention of 1973 and commends the delegates upon the
7 successful confection of a new constitution, a collaborative effort of representative
8 democracy considered to be the most significant achievement in Louisiana's history during
9 the twentieth century; and

10 WHEREAS, the present Constitution lies at the epicenter of the infrastructure of state
11 government as a definitive legal instrument composed of fourteen articles that clearly
12 delineate the rights of individuals, describes the distribution and powers to state officials and
13 local governments, and establishes both state and local civil service systems; and

14 WHEREAS, as a historic document, the Constitution reflects Louisiana's European
15 origins with singular emphasis applied to individual civil liberties and property rights, with
16 precedence found in Spanish law and the Napoleonic Code; "to protect individual rights to
17 life, liberty, and property"; and

18 WHEREAS, the delegation drafted the tenth revision of the state's constitution since

1 statehood in 1812, that had previously been reworked in 1845, 1852, 1864, 1868, 1879,
2 1898, 1913, and 1921; and

3 WHEREAS, its predecessor, the Constitution of 1921, had become a conflicted legal
4 quagmire, the most lengthy of all state constitutions with over 20,000 words containing five
5 hundred amendments, one hundred seventy outside references, dedication of two-thirds of
6 all state funding, and no internal provisions for constitutional reform; and

7 WHEREAS, lawmakers and government watchdog organizations such as the Public
8 Affairs Research Council (PAR) raised objections to the antiquated 1921 Constitution as a
9 hindrance to economic growth and flexibility within state and local governments; and

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

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

19 WHEREAS, convened on January 5, 1973, CC73 delegates came from all corners
20 of the state; they represented a cross-section of state demographics, as the greatest
21 generation whose strength of character was forged by the global conflict of World War II,
22 as activists of the "New South" who were the emerging national voice for minorities and
23 women, and as a new generation of political novices taking their first steps in public service;
24 Phillip Bergeron was the youngest elected delegate at eighteen years of age; and

25 WHEREAS, the roll call of elected delegates in order beginning with District One
26 is Jasper K. Smith, Alphonse Jackson Jr., Wellborn Jack, V. C. Shannon, Tom Stagg,
27 Frank Fulco, Dr. Emmett Asseff, Ford E. Stinson, Charles "Buddy" Roemer, R.
28 Harmon Drew, Bill P. Grier, Kenneth Dale Kilpatrick, E. L. "Bubba" Henry,
29 Paul David Ginn, Shady Wall, Judge James L. "Jim" Dennis, Thomas W. Leigh,
30 R. M. Elkins, J. A. "Jim" McDaniel, Lantz Womack, Jim Brown, Terry R. Reeves,

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

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

27 WHEREAS, at-large delegates appointed by the governor for extraordinary expertise
28 in law and local governmental affairs included Tom Colten, Ambroise H. Landry,
29 Pegram J. Mire, Clyde F. Bel Sr., Mary Zervigon, Joe N. Silverberg, John R. Thistlethwaite,
30 Lawrence A. Chehardy, Kendall Vick, Judy Dunlap, J. K. Haynes, Richard P. Guidry,

1 J. Kenneth Leithman, Risley C. Triche, and Camille F. Gravel Jr.; and

2 WHEREAS, emergency appointment of delegates to fulfill unexpired terms were
3 filled by Dean Louis Berry, Emile Comar Jr., Paul H. Goldman, R. W. "Buzzy" Graham,
4 Norman "Pete" Heine, Louis M. Jones, Corrine Maybruce, James W. Morris,
5 Robert G. Pugh, and Charles Wattigny; and

6 WHEREAS, CC73 was a unicameral body comprised of one hundred thirty-two
7 delegates from all walks of life and some were the best legal minds of the time; it was a
8 self-governing body that employed Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure, a committee
9 system, compromise and good humor, transparency of process with open debate, news media
10 access, and community involvement with public meetings held across the state to gather
11 public opinion and a sense of popular needs and wants, all of which advanced the acceptance
12 of a new constitution; and

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

22 WHEREAS, CC73 was a learning process that created a familiarity between
23 delegates and constituents who were often separated by distance and biased by cultural
24 stereotype; and

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

27 WHEREAS, CC73 was a great success; the delegation had drafted a constitutional
28 blueprint for a basic form of state government laden with protections for the individual and
29 it had championed the tenets of equal opportunity, fair labor relations, small business
30 interests, and expanded voter participation; and

1 WHEREAS, on January 16, 1974, CC73 had concluded its business, and on
2 January 19, 1974, the document was attested to with the signatures of its framers; that
3 included chairman of the convention, E. L. "Bubba" Henry; vice chairmen, Ruth L. Miller,
4 Thomas A. Casey, the Reverend Avery C. Alexander, and Chris J. Roy; treasurer,
5 Herman J. "Monday" Lowe; and the remaining convention delegates that included among
6 its number, Senate President John A. Alario Jr., then a member of the House of
7 Representatives; and

8 WHEREAS, the new Louisiana Constitution of 1974 was ratified by an affirmative
9 vote of the people on April 20, 1974, and took effect of January 1, 1975; and

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

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

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Jerry J. Guillot.

	DIGEST	
SR 43 Original	2018 Regular Session	Alario

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