

2025 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 77

BY REPRESENTATIVE HUGHES

A RESOLUTION

To designate Monday, April 28, 2025, as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Day at the state capitol.

WHEREAS, Louisiana is proud to be home to eight Historically Black Colleges and Universities: Dillard University, Grambling State University, Southern University and A&M College, Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center, Southern University Law Center, Southern University at New Orleans, Southern University Shreveport, and Xavier University of Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana is also home to the nation's only HBCU System, the Southern University System, comprising five campuses that serve as pillars of higher learning and community engagement: Southern University and A&M College in Baton Rouge, Southern University at New Orleans, Southern University Shreveport, the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center in Baton Rouge, and the Southern University Law Center in Baton Rouge; and

WHEREAS, the first HBCU was established one hundred eighty-nine years ago, and HBCUs continue to build a legacy of excellence, achievement, and inclusion in the United States; and

WHEREAS, HBCUs work diligently to promote their institutions' rich histories and continue to create new pathways towards educational excellence, and they play a crucial role in contributing to the economy and workforce, aligning their academic programs with the needs of industry while ensuring HBCU graduates meet the demands of the job market; and

WHEREAS, HBCU graduates are exemplary public servants, scientists, doctors, artists, lawyers, judges, engineers, educators, entertainers, business owners, and leaders and have distinguished themselves in numerous ways, both nationally and in the state; and

WHEREAS, Dillard University fuels the state and regional economy by producing leaders in healthcare, STEM, education, business, and the arts, many of whom remain in Louisiana to work and serve in their communities; the school is recognized for its 98% medical school acceptance rate among pre-med graduates, which is one of the highest in the country; and it is home to the Ray Charles Program in African American Material Culture and the Institute of Jazz and Cultural Arts, amplifying its role as a steward of Black cultural preservation; and

WHEREAS, Grambling State University has nearly one hundred twenty-five years of excellence in action and continues to lead through innovation and impact; the school established Louisiana's first Ph.D. program in Criminology and Justice Administration, became the first and only HBCU with a campus-based Digital Library, earned recognition as a CASE Standards Contributor, ranked among the Top 20 HBCUs in the nation and as the Best in Louisiana for economic and social mobility, and achieved record-breaking growth in alumni giving, corporate partnerships, investor retention, endowed scholarships, and student scholarship awards; and

WHEREAS, Southern University and A&M College is celebrating one hundred forty-five years of service and is the flagship of the System as the leading producer of Black graduates in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); the school boasts the top-ranked nursing program in the nation, according to Nurse.org; and

WHEREAS, Southern University at New Orleans plays a critical role in expanding access to higher education in the Greater New Orleans area, most notably through the graduation of its first cohort of nursing students, the planned groundbreaking of a new state-of-the-art nursing building, and its new data science degree program; the school also reestablished its evening and weekend college to better provide for the adult learners it proudly serves; and

WHEREAS, Southern University Shreveport has established the Aerospace Technology Center as the region's premier training hub for aviation technicians, addressing a critical industry need through a program uniquely positioned to prepare students for

high-wage careers; the school operates a Mobile Health Unit that delivers critical preventative care, screenings, and dental services to underserved communities across northwest Louisiana while providing allied health and nursing students with hands-on clinical training; and

WHEREAS, Southern University Law Center (SULC) has developed an Heirs' Property Certificate Program to equip participants with the basic knowledge needed to maintain ownership of land that has been passed down through generations and since 2017 has had thirteen of its brightest, most service-oriented SULC students consistently honored by the White House as HBCU Scholars; and

WHEREAS, Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center (SUAREC) has partnered with the United States Department of Agriculture to establish the first USDA Agricultural Science Center of Excellence for Nutrition and Diet (ASCEND) Nutrition Hub; under the leadership of Chancellor-Dean Dr. Orlando F. McMeans, Precision "Agcademy" Drone Certification Program has engaged nearly two hundred Louisiana students in drone operations; SUAREC produces Southern University Natural (SUN) Beef, and SUAREC celebrated its 82nd Annual State Livestock and Poultry Show this year; and

WHEREAS, Xavier University of Louisiana celebrates a century of excellence and is a national leader in producing African American Doctor of Pharmacy graduates and Black students who complete medical school, leading to 10.1% of first-year medical students in Louisiana identifying as Black or African American; the school is developing the Xavier Ochsner College of Medicine in partnership with Ochsner Health, which is set to become the fifth historically Black medical school in U.S. history and the only one in the Gulf South; throughout its history, Xavier has accomplished academic achievements and community impact that remain a source of pride, and the school contributes significantly to the cultural and economic vitality of New Orleans by generating jobs, attracting investment, and fueling innovation in the region; and

WHEREAS, it is most fitting to commend Louisiana's Historically Black Colleges and Universities for their outstanding achievements and their numerous alumni for their contributions to their local communities, the state, and the world.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby designate Monday, April 28, 2025, as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Day at the state capitol and does hereby recognize the contributions of HBCUs throughout the state and the country.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES