

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 67

BY SENATOR DUPLESSIS

A RESOLUTION

To commend Xavier University of Louisiana on the occasion of its centennial anniversary and to recognize the university's extraordinary contributions to higher education, the African American community, and the state of Louisiana over the past one hundred years.

WHEREAS, Xavier University of Louisiana, the nation's only historically Black and Catholic university, is celebrating its centennial anniversary in 2025, marking one hundred years of educational excellence, social justice advocacy, and cultural enrichment; and

WHEREAS, Xavier University was founded in 1925 by Saint Katharine Drexel and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament with a mission to provide quality education rooted in faith, service, and social justice, challenging systemic racism and expanding opportunities for underrepresented communities; and

WHEREAS, despite formidable challenges in its initial years, Xavier emerged as a beacon of academic excellence, becoming a leading producer of African American doctors, pharmacists, and STEM graduates, and recently achieving Research Colleges and Universities (RCU) status in the Carnegie classifications; and

WHEREAS, President Emeritus Dr. Norman C. Francis, a 1952 Xavier alumnus, served as president for forty-seven transformative years, expanding enrollment, academic programs, and the campus footprint while establishing Xavier as a national leader in preparing Black students for medical and graduate education; and

WHEREAS, current President, Dr. C. Reynold Verret, continues to uphold and advance Xavier's mission, integrating innovative programs in liberal arts, data science, bioinformatics, crime and social justice, and jazz studies, while maintaining a focus on faith, excellence, and service; and

WHEREAS, Xavier's unique culture of peer support, mentorship, and academic collaboration fosters not just scholars, but compassionate, engaged citizens dedicated to creating a more just and humane society; and

WHEREAS, Xavier's rigorous core curriculum and hands-on educational experiences prepare students to become critical thinkers, global leaders, and life-long learners, with more than thirty percent of its students advancing to graduate or professional schools; and

WHEREAS, from its humble beginnings as a high school and Normal School in 1915, to the establishment of its permanent campus in 1933, through rebuilding after Hurricane Katrina, to its current role as a national educational leader, Xavier University's resilience and commitment have remained unwavering; and

WHEREAS, the yearlong 100th-anniversary celebration provides an opportunity for the Xavier community, alumni, and the state of Louisiana to reflect on a century of achievement and to look forward to a future of continued excellence and impact.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend Xavier University of Louisiana on the celebration of its centennial anniversary, recognize its distinguished history and invaluable contributions to education and social justice, and express best wishes for continued success in the century ahead.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Dr. C. Reynold Verret, President of Xavier University of Louisiana.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE