

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 24

BY REPRESENTATIVE TERRY LANDRY

A RESOLUTION

To designate Tuesday, March 17, 2026, as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Day at the state capitol.

WHEREAS, HBCUs play a vital role in expanding educational opportunities, strengthening communities, and preparing generations of leaders who contribute to the economic, cultural, and civic vitality of the state; and

WHEREAS, for nearly two centuries, HBCUs have stood as enduring symbols of resilience, opportunity, and excellence; opened doors to higher education; and cultivated generations of scholars, leaders, innovators, and public servants whose contributions continue to enrich Louisiana, the nation, and the world; and

WHEREAS, HBCUs have not only transformed lives but also strengthened the economy and workforce by aligning academic programs with the evolving needs of society and preparing graduates who excel as scientists, doctors, educators, artists, lawyers, judges, engineers, entrepreneurs, public servants, and community leaders whose impact resonates across every sector of society; and

WHEREAS, the HBCU tradition of excellence, leadership, and service is powerfully embodied in the life of Dr. Norman C. Francis, a Xavier University of Louisiana graduate who went on to integrate Loyola University New Orleans College of Law; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Francis provided more than fifty-eight years of service to Xavier, including forty-seven as its president; he had the distinction of becoming one of the longest serving university presidents in the nation; through his visionary leadership, unwavering dedication, and commitment to opportunity, he transformed Xavier into a national model of higher education that has shaped generations of scholars, health professionals, and civic leaders and expanded access, fostered growth, and advanced academic excellence for students across Louisiana and the United States; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana's HBCUs have distinguished themselves, both nationally and in the state, in numerous ways; and

WHEREAS, Dillard University continues its longstanding tradition of academic excellence and national competitiveness; the university's nationally recognized Honda Campus All-Star Challenge team advanced to the 2025 National Championship Tournament in Los Angeles for the third consecutive year, and the university participated in a premier academic quiz competition that celebrates scholarship and teamwork; the university recently received a historic \$19 million gift from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott, which is the largest private donation in the university's history, to support student success, scholarships, and institutional advancement; and

WHEREAS, Grambling State University remains a pillar of opportunity and leadership in Louisiana and has advanced academic innovation through the establishment of the state's first Ph.D. program in criminology and justice administration; the university also celebrates a proud legacy of achievement marked by one hundred years of Tiger Athletics and one hundred years of the World Famed Tiger Marching Band; and

WHEREAS, Southern University and A&M College, the flagship institution of the Southern University System and a Carnegie Research 2 institution, continues more than one hundred forty-six years of leadership in higher education while opening a forty-eight-million-dollar state-of-the-art STEM complex and Global Innovation and Welcome Center and celebrating the internationally recognized "Human Jukebox" Marching Band being named ESPN's Band of the Year for 2025; and

WHEREAS, Southern University Law Center continues to expand access to justice and experiential legal education through the construction of a new Clinical Legal Education Building, which strengthens opportunities for students while enhancing legal services for the Baton Rouge community; and

WHEREAS, Southern University at New Orleans, which celebrates seventy years of excellence and service to the Greater New Orleans community, recently hosted the first-ever Egyptian-commissioned replica King Tutankhamun exhibition at a historically black college or university and celebrated the SUNO Men's Basketball Team capturing the 2026 HBCU Athletic Conference Tournament Championship, its first conference title since 2012; and

WHEREAS, Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center continues to advance agricultural innovation and workforce development as the only historically black college or university selected as a site for the United States Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service Laboratory; the university also provides hands-on learning through programs such as its viticulture and enology research vineyard and the VET Explore program preparing future veterinarians; and

WHEREAS, Southern University at Shreveport continues to strengthen workforce development and community impact in North Louisiana through the Aerospace Technology Center, which serves as the region's premier training hub for aviation technicians; the university also expands community partnerships, including a re-entry workforce training initiative with the Caddo Parish Sheriff's Office, and advances entrepreneurship through the Roy Griggs School of Business; and

WHEREAS, Xavier University of Louisiana continues its legacy of academic excellence established under the leadership of Dr. Norman C. Francis and remains a national leader in preparing students for careers in health professions; the university ranks among the nation's leading producers of African American undergraduates who go on to complete medical school and is one of the top producers of African American Doctor of Pharmacy graduates, which contributes significantly to the educational, cultural, and economic vitality of the State of Louisiana; and

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

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby designate Tuesday, March 17, 2026, as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Day at the state capitol and does hereby acknowledge Louisiana's HBCUs for their invaluable contributions to our residents and state.

---

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES