

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 286

BY REPRESENTATIVE OWEN

RURAL/DEVELOPMENT: Urges and requests Louisiana Economic Development to study the feasibility of a Louisiana Rural Community Energy and Education Investment Program

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request Louisiana Economic Development to conduct a comprehensive study  
3 on the feasibility of establishing a Louisiana Rural Community Energy and  
4 Education Investment Program.

5 WHEREAS, rural communities and public institutions in this state face rising energy  
6 and operational costs that consume budgets already stretched thin, drawing dollars away  
7 from classrooms, teachers, and the basic infrastructure on which rural life depends, with  
8 federal Energy Information Administration data showing that the average retail residential  
9 electricity price in this state rose over fourteen percent from 2024 to 2025, more than double  
10 the national average over the same period; and

11 WHEREAS, the United States Department of Energy reports that K-12 school  
12 districts nationally spend approximately eight billion dollars annually on energy, an expense  
13 second only to paying the teachers themselves, and this burden falls hardest on rural school  
14 systems, community and technical colleges, and local governmental entities operating on the  
15 thinnest of margins; and

16 WHEREAS, between 2010 and 2020, only nineteen of this state's sixty-four parishes  
17 grew in population, and the twenty-nine parishes in the northern half of the state collectively  
18 lost almost thirty-seven thousand residents, and rural areas continue to experience population  
19 decline, workforce shortages, and limited access to modern educational technology and  
20 skilled-trades training programs; and

1           WHEREAS, targeted investments in energy efficiency, building modernization,  
2 on-site energy generation, and workforce training infrastructure can deliver lasting  
3 reductions in operational costs to taxpayer-funded institutions and build the kind of  
4 education-to-career pipelines that keep young Louisianans working and raising families in  
5 the communities that raised them; and

6           WHEREAS, well-designed public-private partnerships, supported by targeted tax  
7 incentives and financing tools, can put private capital to work, upgrading public facilities at  
8 little or no up-front cost to taxpayers, multiplying every state dollar with private investment;  
9 and

10           WHEREAS, such a program would direct its benefits to the rural and economically  
11 distressed communities that need them most, invite corporate, industrial, and financial  
12 institution investment on terms favorable to the public, and align workforce training with the  
13 real and immediate needs of industry in this state; and

14           WHEREAS, the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana recognizes  
15 the importance of accountability, measurable outcomes, and annual reporting to ensure  
16 transparency and maximum public benefit.

17           THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the  
18 Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request Louisiana Economic Development  
19 to conduct a comprehensive feasibility study on establishing a Louisiana Rural Community  
20 Energy and Education Investment Program, including but not limited to all of the following  
21 areas of study:

22           (1) Analysis of potential tax credit structures and other financing mechanisms  
23 designed to attract private capital with minimal or no up-front cost to taxpayers.

24           (2) Identification of eligible investments in energy systems, energy-efficiency  
25 improvements, building modernization, and workforce development infrastructure that are  
26 most suitable for rural regions of this state.

27           (3) Rural prioritization mechanisms that target economically distressed parishes and  
28 public institutions.

29           (4) Performance standards, projected cost savings for public entities, and economic  
30 impact analysis.

1 (5) Opportunities for coordination with existing federal programs.

2 (6) Implementation recommendations that incorporate specific, measurable  
3 performance indicators, verification of savings, and annual public reporting requirements.

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in conducting the study, Louisiana Economic  
5 Development shall solicit input from the Department of Revenue, Louisiana Works, the  
6 Public Service Commission, and other appropriate state agencies.

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Louisiana Economic Development shall submit  
8 a written report of its findings, conclusions, and any recommended legislation to the House  
9 Committee on Ways and Means, the House Committee on Commerce, and the House  
10 Committee on Education no later than February 1, 2027.

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the  
12 secretary of Louisiana Economic Development, the secretary of Louisiana Works, the  
13 secretary of the Department of Revenue, and the chair of the Public Service Commission.

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DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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HR 286 Original

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Owen

Requests Louisiana Economic Development to conduct a study on the feasibility of establishing a Louisiana Rural Community Energy and Education Investment Program, comprised of tax incentives and public-private partnerships to finance renewable energy, energy efficiency, and workforce infrastructure improvements in rural communities.

Requests a written report of its findings no later than Feb. 1, 2027.