HLS 19RS-2508 ORIGINAL

2019 Regular Session

21

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 96

BY REPRESENTATIVE FALCONER

HIGHER ED/BD REGENTS: Requests that the Board of Regents study and make recommendations relative to student debt relief measures

## 1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 2 To urge and request the Board of Regents, in collaboration with the public postsecondary 3 education management boards, to conduct a study of student debt relief measures, 4 nationally and statewide, and to submit a written report of findings and conclusions, 5 including recommendations for legislation relative to debt as a barrier to reenrollment for those who have completed some postsecondary education not later 6 7 than thirty days prior to the beginning of the 2020 Regular Session of the 8 Legislature. 9 WHEREAS, forty-seven percent of working-age Louisianians, more than one million 10 persons, hold a high school diploma or less as their highest level of education, meaning 11 nearly half of the state's working-age population is at risk of not meeting the demands of the 12 twenty-first century workforce; this often results in Louisianians being unemployed or 13 underemployed and in need of new educational opportunities to advance and thrive; and 14 WHEREAS, the Board of Regents has set a goal of doubling the number of adults 15 in Louisiana with a meaningful, market-ready postsecondary education credential by the year 16 2030; doubling the number of annual credential recipients represents reaching an educational 17 attainment level of sixty percent and will require Louisiana to move from producing 18 approximately forty thousand credentials in 2019 to eighty-five thousand in 2030; and 19 WHEREAS, this goal will demand that the Louisiana postsecondary education community and its partners implement new strategies to reach and successfully reengage all 20

potential student populations, with an emphasis on working-age adults; and

1	WHEREAS, student debt is a major barrier to adult student reenrollment and degree
2	completion; many students struggle to afford the growing cost of postsecondary education
3	and are unable to complete their education because of financial challenges; and
4	WHEREAS, an outstanding balance may lead to registration and transcript holds,
5	which can discourage students from remaining on the pathway to degree completion while
6	also preventing some students from reenrolling or transferring to another institution to
7	complete a degree; and
8	WHEREAS, a decade of disinvestment has radically reduced state support for
9	Louisiana's colleges and universities and shifted the funding burden to students and their
10	parents; as a result, postsecondary education institutions are more reliant on self-generated
11	revenue, including student tuition and fees, to operate; therefore, a reasonable approach to
12	minimizing student debt and addressing debt forgiveness for adult students must be
13	considered.
14	THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
15	urge and request the Board of Regents, in collaboration with the public postsecondary
16	education management boards, to conduct a study of student debt relief measures, nationally
17	and statewide, and to submit a written report of findings and conclusions, including
18	recommendations for legislation relative to debt as a barrier to reenrollment for those who
19	have completed some postsecondary education not later than thirty days prior to the
20	beginning of the 2020 Regular Session of the Legislature.
21	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that such report shall include findings and
22	recommendations relative to establishing a student tuition forgiveness and engagement
23	program that shall provide for the following:
24	(1) Identification and examination of successful programs nationally and within the
25	state, including pertinent background material, data, an inventory of existing programs, and
26	recognized best practices that may serve as models for a statewide program in Louisiana,
27	including:
28	(a) An analysis of the cost of attendance by institution, state support per student,
29	financial aid from nonstate sources, and population-based metrics to better understand
30	affordability and student cost options.

1	(b) A recommendation for policy steps to improve public postsecondary education
2	affordability in Louisiana and maximize federal and state financial aid to both traditional and
3	nontraditional student populations, including:
4	(i) The development of a method of informing students of their estimated current
5	student loan indebtedness for the purposes of planning prior to students incurring additional
6	debt for each upcoming academic term.
7	(ii) The development of a proposal related to debt mitigation, debt forgiveness, or
8	payment deferrals using the expertise of the office of debt recovery within the Department
9	of Revenue, the office of the attorney general, and the public postsecondary education
10	management boards and institutions to develop and implement a student tuition forgiveness
11	program in Louisiana.
12	(iii) An estimate of costs associated with the implementation of such a program and
13	identification of potential funding sources to sustain the program.
14	(2) A plan and timeline for implementation of the recommendations.
15	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
16	chairman of the Board of Regents, the commissioner of higher education, and the chairman
17	of each public postsecondary education management board.

## **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)]

HCR 96 Original

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Falconer

Requests the Bd. of Regents report to the legislature on student debt relief measures not later than 30 days prior to the 2020 R.S.