

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 20

BY SENATOR FIELDS

A RESOLUTION

To recognize Monday, April 26, 2021, as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Day at the 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 Agriculture Research and Extension Center, Southern Law Center, Southern University New Orleans, Southern University Shreveport, and Xavier University of Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana is also home of the nation's only HBCU System (Southern University System) which is uniquely positioned as an exemplar of successful HBCU policies and practices; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana's HBCUs collectively enrolled 22,854 students in 2019-2020; and

WHEREAS, since their establishment 184 years ago, HBCUs have provided black students with a powerful avenue, and for some, the only path to a college degree; and

WHEREAS, as Louisiana grapples with both the global COVID-19 pandemic and historical national civil unrest, HBCUs have proven to be invaluable assets based on their history, student experiences, and societal contributions; and

WHEREAS, several HBCUs and their leaders are contributing to research to help fight the biological and socio-political impacts of the pandemic; and

WHEREAS, higher education universally provides wide-ranging benefits to students, including higher average lifetime wages, better career opportunities, increased job security and satisfaction, and better health, and are a considerable economic impact on their communities, state, and region; and

WHEREAS, HBCUs enroll and successfully graduate greater numbers of low-income, first-generation, and academically underprepared college students compared to non-HBCUs; and

WHEREAS, evidence demonstrates high levels of student-faculty engagement and mentorship at HBCUs, leading to stronger student success; and

WHEREAS, HBCUs are credited with building the black middle class in America with black graduates of HBCUs who are significantly more likely to be better off financially and socially; and

WHEREAS, research has found that, on average, 58% of black HBCU graduates strongly agree that professors at their university cared about them as individuals (compared to 25% for black non-HBCU graduates); and

WHEREAS, black HBCU graduates are nearly twice as likely as black graduates of non-HBCUs to strongly agree that their university prepared them well for life outside of college (55% vs. 29%); and

WHEREAS, the pageantry, traditions, bands, and rivalries of HBCUs are second to none; and

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

Dillard University: One of the nation's leading producers of black physicists; and

Grambling State University: The leading producer of computer science graduates in the state of Louisiana and the only institution to offer bachelor's degree programs in cybersecurity and cloud computing; and

Southern University and A&M College (SUBR): The leading producer of black engineers in Louisiana whose graduates play significant, creative, and administrative roles at NASA, Boeing, IBM, Entergy, and Dow Chemical, among other leading companies; and

Southern University New Orleans (SUNO): The only HBCU in the state to offer a forensic science program; and

Southern University Shreveport (SUSLA): The only comprehensive two-year community college in north Louisiana with an aerospace technology program; and

Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center: The first HBCU to launch its own CBC and THC medical marijuana lines; and

Southern University Law Center (SULC): Counted among the many SULC alumni are 104 graduates currently serving as judges; and

Xavier University of Louisiana: Nationally recognized for the number of black graduates who go on to successfully complete medical school (*Medical School Association of American Medical Colleges' 2020* report); and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate to commend Louisiana's eight Historically Black Colleges and Universities for their outstanding achievements in their local communities, the state, and the world.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby recognize Monday, April 26, 2021, as HBCU Day at the Capitol and does hereby especially acknowledge Louisiana's HBCUs' invaluable contributions to our residents and state.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Dr. Kim Hunter Reed, commissioner of higher education, and chair of the HBCU Advisory Council.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE