Regular Session, 2011

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 115

BY REPRESENTATIVE SCHRODER

HIGHER ED/BD REGENTS: Requests study of standards and criteria for members of the Board of Regents

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education to study any and all policy alternatives related to ensuring that the members of the Board of Regents are prepared to effectively execute their constitutional responsibilities for postsecondary education policy and to report their findings to the legislature not later than sixty days prior to the beginning of the 2012 Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana.

WHEREAS, the Constitution of Louisiana provides the Board of Regents with several important powers with respect to public postsecondary education in Louisiana including requiring that it plan, coordinate, and have budgetary responsibility for all public postsecondary education; approve, revise, and eliminate degree programs; and formulate a master plan which includes a formula for equitable distribution of funds to the institutions; and

WHEREAS, the legislature has recently taken steps that further expand the Board of Regents' role in setting broad policy direction for postsecondary education in the state including funding institutions based on a performance formula and the Granting Resources and Autonomy for Degrees (GRAD) Act; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Regents is composed of two members from each of the state's congressional districts and one member from the state at large, all appointed by the governor, but the constitution does not provide for qualifications or standards for such appointees; and

WHEREAS, given the importance of the Board of Regents in directing the development of postsecondary education and the critical importance of postsecondary education to the health, welfare, and economy of the state as a whole, it is essential that the legislature take steps to ensure that board members are not simply political allies of the appointing governor but are, either through experience or training, informed about the issues that the board deals with and prepared to execute their responsibilities in a manner that is in the best interest of the state as a whole; and

WHEREAS, many of the ideal characteristics of a member of the Board of Regents are similar to the ideal characteristics of any public servant: demonstrated leadership, a concern with the well-being of the state as a whole, and a commitment to the job to be done that will motivate him or her to attend meetings, research issues, engage in debate, and pursue professional development opportunities; and

WHEREAS, though the legislature recognizes that establishing qualifications, such as requiring that members have postsecondary degrees, may be helpful, it also recognizes that such a requirement is not in itself sufficient and that the state needs a Board of Regents comprised of advocates for the success of postsecondary education throughout the state rather than advocates for particular institutions or particular systems or classes of institutions; and

WHEREAS, another possible avenue for strengthening the Board of Regents is requiring that appointments be made from names submitted by appropriate nominating authorities which, if done correctly, would mean that a person's abilities and commitment were more generally recognized and respected by peers and in turn could mitigate the influence of short-term political forces in the board's decision making; and

WHEREAS, a requirement for professional development training, such as would be required by House Bill No. 562 of the 2011 Regular Session of the Legislature, is another factor which should be considered in establishing policies that will improve the capacity of the board to handle the difficult issues it faces.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education to study any and all policy alternatives related to ensuring that the members of the

Board of Regents are prepared to effectively execute their constitutional responsibilities for postsecondary education policy and to report their findings to the legislature not later than sixty days prior to the beginning of the 2012 Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana.

DIGEST

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Schroder HCR No. 115

Requests the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education to study any and all policy alternatives related to ensuring that the members of the Board of Regents are prepared to effectively execute their constitutional responsibilities for postsecondary education policy and to report their findings to the legislature not later than 60 days prior to the 2012 R.S.