

2015 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 38

BY REPRESENTATIVE BADON

COMMENDATIONS: Commends Xavier University President Norman Francis upon his retirement

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To commend Dr. Norman Francis upon his retirement after forty-six years as president of
3 Xavier University of Louisiana in New Orleans.

4 WHEREAS, Norman Francis was a Xavier University student, graduating with
5 honors in 1952 and serving as class president each year of his matriculation; and

6 WHEREAS, Dr. Francis was the first black graduate of Loyola University Law
7 School in New Orleans, after which he served in the United States Army; following his
8 Army service, Dr. Francis worked in the United States Attorney's Office, where he helped
9 integrate federal agencies in the South; and

10 WHEREAS, Dr. Francis pursued a career in education and became the dean of men
11 at Xavier; in 1961, after the Freedom Riders' bus was bombed in Alabama, Dean Francis
12 offered housing to the Riders in one of Xavier University's dorms; and

13 WHEREAS, Dr. Francis accepted the presidency of his alma mater in 1968, and
14 since his installation, enrollment at Xavier has increased almost threefold and the campus
15 has expanded from five buildings covering one city block to sixteen buildings on sixty acres;
16 Dr. Francis has guided Xavier University from a twenty million dollar endowment to more
17 than one hundred thirty million dollars; and

18 WHEREAS, as one of the early voices calling for education reform, Dr. Francis
19 served on the 1983 National Commission on Excellence in Education and had a hand in
20 producing "A Nation At Risk", a report on the deficiencies in the American education system
21 that remains influential in the shaping of education strategies; and

1 WHEREAS, Dr. Francis' educational focus has led more than sixty percent of
2 incoming Xavier University freshmen students to concentrate their studies in the fields of
3 science, technology, engineering, and math, and Xavier University is the top producer of
4 black students earning medical degrees; as president, Dr. Francis has presented nearly twenty
5 thousand diplomas to graduating seniors; and

6 WHEREAS, during his tenure as Xavier University president, Dr. Francis was called
7 upon to serve on more than fifty boards; he has received forty honorary degrees; Dr. Francis
8 was honored by *The Times-Picayune* in 1991 with the Loving Cup, an award for his
9 unselfish work for the community without expectation of public recognition or material
10 reward; in 2006, President George W. Bush awarded Dr. Francis the Presidential Medal of
11 Freedom, the nation's highest civil honor, for his lifetime of service to civic causes; and

12 WHEREAS, following Hurricane Katrina in 2005, Dr. Francis was appointed
13 chairman of the Louisiana Recovery Authority and was tasked with heading the state's first
14 efforts toward rebuilding; and

15 WHEREAS, while Dr. Norman Francis will be sorely missed at the helm of Xavier
16 University after his retirement at the end of the 2014-2015 school year, his influence on the
17 school's educational mission will remain a positive force and provide clear guidance towards
18 perpetual improvement in the years to come.

19 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
20 commend Dr. Norman Francis for forty-six years of distinguished service as president of
21 Xavier University; does hereby express sincere appreciation for a job well done in preparing
22 students for careers and civic contributions upon graduation from Xavier University, in part
23 by his own example; and does hereby extend best wishes for a full and happy life upon his
24 retirement.

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted
26 to Dr. Norman Francis.

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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Commends Dr. Norman Francis upon his retirement as president of Xavier University of La.