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Regents Support LA GRAD Act

BATON ROUGE, La. –As the higher education community prepares for HB 1171 to be heard tomorrow by the House Education Committee, Board of Regents Chairman Artis Terrell released the following statement of support for the governor's signature piece of higher education legislation, the GRAD Act.

Statement on LA GRAD Act by Board of Regents

May 5, 2010

Louisiana's colleges and universities are committed to improved performance and are unified in their support of the Governor's signature piece of education legislation, the Granting Resources and Autonomy for Diplomas Act or GRAD Act.

Currently, Louisiana is the only state in the nation that requires a two-thirds vote of the Legislature to raise college tuition. This requirement ties the hands of campuses in managing their revenues during tough budgetary times which traditionally impact higher education and healthcare disproportionately in Louisiana. With passage of the GRAD Act, the state's higher education institutions will be given limited authority to increase tuition in exchange for improved performance in key areas including graduation rates. This measure allows them to remain competitive with peer institutions and create the culture of student success necessary to meet the state's current and future workforce needs.

The GRAD Act's simple goal of improving outcomes for college students is one that several university management systems, the Council for a Better Louisiana, BILD Higher Education, Blueprint Louisiana and the Board of Regents unilaterally support. During their March meeting, the Regents unanimously approved a motion indicating their strong commitment to the GRAD Act's intent. The Board believes that every reasonable option should be placed on the table to resolve the current financial crisis facing higher education. Adoption of the GRAD Act is a critical component in supporting our colleges and universities as they responsibly manage their budgets.

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