

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

LOUISIANA BOARD OF REGENTS - REGENTS.LA.GOV



"Higher education's talent development imperative is not paused during this pandemic. In fact, it is amplified."

Kim Hunter Reed, Ph.D.
Commissioner of Higher Education



Good morning, Regents.

With the Regular Session officially concluded as of 6 p.m. yesterday, only one of Regents' pandemic priority bills, HB689 by Rep. Zeringue, will carry forward into the Special Session for consideration as it is among the presiding officer's call for the Extraordinary Session. The bill will extend for three years the fee and operational autonomies campuses currently enjoy. Campus and system presidents and chancellors are actively communicating the significance of the financial impact the bill carries.

Bill updates:

- After the House concurred with the Senate amendments by a vote of 88 yeas and 6 nays, **HB676 – Free the Transcript by Rep. Emerson** is now enrolled.
- **HB740 – Student Info Protection/Anti-Hacking by Rep. Wright** – is now enrolled after the House concurred with Senate amendments by a vote of 96 yeas and 0 nays.
- The House initially refused to concur with an amendment Sen. Jackson made to **HB870 – TOPS Adjustments by Rep. Garofalo**. The amendment will expand the easing of initial eligibility requirements for rising high school seniors. After being assigned to the conference committee, the House recalled the amended bill and concurred by a vote of 94 yeas and 0 nays.
- **SB481 by Sen. Fields** received concurrence from the Senate by a vote of 33 yeas and 0 nays and is now enrolled.

Other Bills and Resolutions of note:

- **HR52 by Speaker Schexnayder** passed off the House floor by a vote of 92 yeas and 0 nays. This bill requests that LCTCS and Regents study and report relative to changes needed for community and technical colleges in response to COVID-19.
- **HCR33 by Rep. Freiberg** is now enrolled. This resolution calls for Regents, the Department of Revenue, the Louisiana Workforce Commission and LOSFA to collaborate to study the trajectory of Louisiana's postsecondary graduates.
- **HCR45 by Rep. Hodges** is now enrolled. This resolution requests that Regents, in consultation with the public postsecondary education management boards, study issues and compile data relative to hiring and English-speaking requirements for faculty at public postsecondary education institutions.
- **HR34 by Rep. McKnight** is enrolled as of a vote on the House floor earlier today. This resolution requests that the Department of Education, LWC and Regents jointly report on the status of data sharing agreements for the purpose of evaluating the Jump Start program.
- **SB365 by Sen. Cloud** is now enrolled. This bill requires that information be provided to students during the development and revision of their individual graduation plans related to high-demand jobs, the higher ed programs they require and the costs of those programs.
- **HCR92 by Rep. Pierre** is now enrolled. This resolution urges and requests the LCTCS to pilot a regional approach for the delivery of commercial driver's license training and certification.
- **HB37 by Rep. McMahon** is now enrolled. This bill provides that TOPS award amounts at Northwest Louisiana Technical and Community College shall match the annual award amounts at all other technical and community colleges.
- **SB318 by Sen. Cathey** is now enrolled. This bill expands TOPS-Tech award eligibility for certain military veterans.
- **SB406 by Sen. Mizell** is now enrolled. This bill provides for rural access to broadband high-speed Internet service.
- **SB437 by Sen. Jackson** is now enrolled. This bill allows postsecondary education management boards to provide for sick leave policies in which employees can use sick leave to care for immediate family members.

Tomorrow morning, Regents will present to the House Appropriations Committee an overview of higher education's revised budget, with the \$21.7M anticipated cut included. It is imperative that we continue to stress that this is a true cut and that CARES funding does not fully alleviate higher ed shortfalls.

As the Special Session unfolds, we will keep you informed of legislative action that impacts higher education.

As always, please let me know if you have any comments, questions, suggestions or concerns. You can always find me via my cell: 985.516.1516.

Thank you,

Kim M. Conser