

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 40

BY SENATORS FIELDS AND PEACOCK

A RESOLUTION

To commend Dr. Ray L. Belton upon his announced retirement as president of the Southern University System and chancellor of Southern University and Agricultural and Mechanical College at Baton Rouge for his outstanding accomplishments, his years of public service, and his contributions to the Southern University System and the entire state of Louisiana.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate to commend Dr. Ray L. Belton as the tenth president of the Southern University System, a position in which he has served with great honor and distinction, providing oversight for all five campuses in the system; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Belton has over thirty-five years of service with the Southern University System, the only historically Black university system in America, and has announced his retirement effective this fall; and

WHEREAS, he has served as a chief executive officer in the System for twenty-one years; first as the chancellor of Southern University at Shreveport and then as president-chancellor for the System and Southern University at Baton Rouge; and

WHEREAS, during all of his years of service, Dr. Belton has always prioritized the best interests of the students; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, when the Southern University's Board of Supervisors combined the roles of president of the System and chancellor of Southern University at Baton Rouge, Dr. Belton stepped up and made history by accepting the daunting new position; and

WHEREAS, as president-chancellor, he has more than met the challenge of simultaneously fulfilling two demanding roles; he has greatly improved both the system and the institution by implementing new programs and strategic initiatives that have increased efficiencies, boosted enrollment, strengthened teaching and learning, improved student success, enhanced academic research and development, expanded fundraising, multiplied

philanthropic giving, and elevated alumni engagement; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Belton has additionally overseen the remarkable turnaround of Southern University Baton Rouge's athletic department, ascending from a period when only three of the institution's collegiate teams were eligible for postseason competition to, a historical first, where all fifteen of its teams are now eligible; and

WHEREAS, under his leadership, both Southern University Shreveport and Southern University Baton Rouge saw unprecedented capital improvements to structures that serve both academia and student life; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Belton's steadfast dedication has not been limited to the Southern University System and its institutions as exemplified in his work to improve the entire postsecondary education enterprise for all of Louisiana's citizens; and

WHEREAS, he has diligently worked with the Louisiana Board of Regents, the presidents of other Louisiana postsecondary management boards, the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, and local public school governing authorities to ensure students can readily access postsecondary educational services and successfully navigate the pathways to high-value postsecondary credentials; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Belton has worked with business and industry, as well as workforce development organizations, to help ensure graduates have a seamless path to careers; and

WHEREAS, he has held several national leadership positions, including serving on the Board of Trustees of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Belton's tireless dedication to promote and enhance the System, the institutions of the System, and the state of Louisiana is greatly appreciated; and

WHEREAS, upon his retirement this Fall, Dr. Belton will leave behind the System and its institutions, the Louisiana postsecondary education enterprise, and the state of Louisiana better in every respect.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend Dr. Ray L. Belton, president of the Southern University System and chancellor of Southern University and A&M College at Baton Rouge, for his outstanding service to the Southern University System and the entire state of Louisiana.

SR NO. 40

ENROLLED

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to
Dr. Ray L. Belton.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE