

2023 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 179

BY REPRESENTATIVES ECHOLS, FARNUM, GADBERRY, MIKE JOHNSON,
MAGEE, NEWELL, STEFANSKI, AND THOMAS

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism to study and make recommendations relative to repairs needed at the historic Pentagon Barracks.

WHEREAS, the historic Pentagon Barracks has played a significant role in the history of the state; and

WHEREAS, from 1819 to 1823, after the U.S. Army selected the fort at Baton Rouge to serve as an ordnance depot, the Army built four barracks buildings and a combination commissary and warehouse building making up the Pentagon Barracks; the commissary and warehouse building was torn down within years of being built, leaving the four barracks buildings; and

WHEREAS, the ordnance depot grew to be the largest in the South, served as a main supply depot during the Mexican War in 1847, changed hands between the Union and Confederacy during the Civil War, and was deactivated as a military post in 1879; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana State University used the Pentagon Barracks to house cadets and other students from 1886 until 1950 when they were renovated into apartments for LSU faculty and other state employees; and

WHEREAS, in 1951, Governor Earl K. Long ordered that some of the space be used as state offices while some apartments remained; and

WHEREAS, throughout its history the Pentagon Barracks has played host to many American historical figures including several U.S. presidents and prominent military figures, and in 1976, the buildings were placed on the National Historic Register; and

WHEREAS, the Pentagon Barracks is still used as apartments for state officials and the Pentagon Barracks Museum contains many displays relating to the history of the facility; and

WHEREAS, the Pentagon Barracks has reached a state of disrepair and is in need of refurbishment and preservation; and

WHEREAS, in consideration of its significant history, it is appropriate to take efforts to maintain the structural and historical integrity of the Pentagon Barracks within the State Capitol Historic District in accordance with the public policy of the state, as declared in R.S. 25:781, to provide for the historic preservation of the buildings and grounds so that they may be preserved for the education, inspiration, pleasure, and enrichment of the citizens of this state; and

WHEREAS, the division of historic preservation, office of cultural development, Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism is charged with regulating the historic character of the buildings of the historic district.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism to study and make recommendations relative to historic repairs needed at the Pentagon Barracks in keeping with the historic character of the buildings and to produce a report of previous repairs and future actions needed to preserve the integrity of the structure of the Pentagon Barracks.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in conducting its study, the department is urged to utilize all available resources including experts from the division of historic preservation, the division of archeology, and any other divisions to produce recommendations consistent with United States Department of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the department shall report its findings to the House of Representatives and the division of administration prior to April 15, 2024.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES