

2024 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 27

BY REPRESENTATIVE HUGHES

SPECIAL DAY/WEEK/MONTH: Recognizes March 19, 2024, as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Day at the state capitol

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To recognize Tuesday, March 19, 2024, as Historically Black Colleges and Universities
3 (HBCU) Day at the state capitol.

4 WHEREAS, Louisiana is proud to be home to eight Historically Black Colleges and
5 Universities (HBCUs): Dillard University, Grambling State University, Southern University
6 and A&M College, Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center,
7 Southern University Law Center, Southern University at New Orleans, Southern University
8 at Shreveport, and Xavier University of Louisiana; and

9 WHEREAS, Louisiana is home to the nation's only HBCU System, the Southern
10 University System, which is uniquely positioned as an exemplar with a profound
11 commitment to research and student success; the system's board of supervisors is celebrating
12 fifty years of service to the students, faculty, staff, and community surrounding the its five
13 campuses in Baton Rouge, New Orleans and Shreveport; and

14 WHEREAS, Grambling State University and Southern University and A&M College
15 celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the annual Bayou Classic extravaganza, which brings
16 fans, supporters, and alumni of both universities together for a celebration of football,
17 family, and tradition in New Orleans; and

18 WHEREAS, the University of Louisiana System welcomed new leadership in 2024,
19 naming Dr. Martin Lemelle as the president of Grambling State University; Dr. Lemelle, a
20 2006 graduate and former Student Government Association president of Grambling, recently
21 served as the executive vice president and chief financial officer at Maryland Institute

1 College of Art; his prior position as the executive vice president and chief operating officer
2 at Grambling from 2016 to 2021 demonstrates his extensive experience in higher education
3 administration, preparing him for his new leadership role at the university; and

4 WHEREAS, on March 17, 2023, Dr. Aubra J. Gantt, was named the chancellor of
5 Southern University at Shreveport (SUSLA); Dr. Gantt began her educational career at
6 SUSLA, where she learned one of her passions was to serve students, faculty, and staff from
7 various backgrounds; she is a believer in the community college mission because she is a
8 product of a community college; and

9 WHEREAS, since their establishment 188 years ago, HBCUs have continued to build
10 a legacy of excellence, achievement, and tradition; HBCUs were created to provide
11 opportunities for access to education for black students during a time when institutions of
12 higher education discriminated against black Americans; the establishment and advancement
13 of these universities fostered academic excellence, cultural empowerment, and professional
14 readiness for black students throughout our nation; and

15 WHEREAS, HBCUs play a crucial role in contributing to the economy and
16 workforce, aligning their academic programs with the needs of industry while ensuring
17 HBCU graduates meet the demands of the job market; HBCU graduates are exemplary
18 public servants, scientists, doctors, artists, lawyers, judges, engineers, educators,
19 entertainers, business owners, and leaders; and

20 WHEREAS, Louisiana's HBCUs have distinguished themselves, both nationally and
21 in the state, in numerous ways including:

22 (1) Dillard University is recognized for its Ray Charles Program in African
23 American Material Culture, to which the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation awarded a
24 significant grant for a multi-year project titled "Higher Learning through Humanities in Food
25 Studies".

26 (2) Grambling State University, with a legacy spanning nearly 122 years, pioneered
27 Louisiana's first Doctor of Philosophy program in Criminology and Justice Administration,
28 receiving student scholarships from Beyoncé's "BeyGood" Foundation that showcase the
29 institution's commitment to innovation and student support.

1 (3) Southern University and A&M College, which is a Carnegie Research 2
2 institution, was awarded a grant to aid in pursuit of the Carnegie Research 1 designation, and
3 received, with Boeing, a joint award from NASA for their combined work on NASA's Space
4 Launch System rocket.

5 (4) Southern University at New Orleans, which will soon celebrate 65 years of
6 providing access to educational opportunities for students, is in the process of designing a
7 new nursing building, recently enrolled its first cybersecurity cohort, and formalized an
8 articulation agreement for a cybersecurity degree pathway with Delgado Community College
9 to train future cybersecurity practitioners in the field of information technology.

10 (5) Southern University Shreveport, celebrating 56 years of providing an excellent
11 and accessible educational experience to students and programming for its surrounding
12 community, has acquired a new mobile health unit, which will travel across northwest
13 Louisiana to provide quality health and dental screenings to under-served populations and
14 bring healthcare to communities that would otherwise not receive these services.

15 (6) Southern University Law Center, a highly ranked legal education institution, has
16 prospered within the esports industry, hosting regional and national tournaments in the
17 newly established Esports Innovation Lab.

18 (7) Xavier University of Louisiana, which is known for being the top producer of
19 black graduates who earn medical degrees, was recently recognized by OnlineU as the
20 second-ranked HBCU in the nation for highest payoff for black graduates; and

21 WHEREAS, it is appropriate to commend Louisiana's Historically Black Colleges
22 and Universities for their outstanding achievements and their numerous alumni for their
23 contributions to their local communities, the state of Louisiana, and the world as a whole.

24 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of the Legislature of Louisiana
25 does hereby recognize Tuesday, March 19, 2024, as Historically Black Colleges and
26 Universities (HBCU) Day at the state capitol and does hereby acknowledge Louisiana's
27 HBCUs for their invaluable contributions to our residents and state.

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)]

HR 27 Original

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