

2024 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 11

BY SENATOR BOUDREAUX

SPECIAL DAY/WEEK/MONTH. Recognizes Tuesday, March 19, 2024, as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Day at the Louisiana State Capitol.

1 A RESOLUTION

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

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

9 WHEREAS, Louisiana is also 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 and whose Board of Supervisors is celebrating  
12 fifty years of service to the students, faculty, staff, and community surrounding the system's  
13 five 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 Bayou Classic, an annual extravaganza that brings  
16 fans, supporters, and alumni of both universities for a celebration of football, family, and  
17 tradition in New Orleans; and

18 WHEREAS, it would be remiss not to welcome two new leaders of Louisiana's

1 HBCU presidents to the state: Dr. Martin Lemelle and Dr. Aubra J. Gantt; and

2 WHEREAS, the University of Louisiana System welcomed new leadership in 2024,  
3 in naming Dr. Martin Lemelle as the eleventh President of Grambling State University; and

4 WHEREAS, Dr. Lemelle, a 2006 graduate and former Student Government  
5 Association President of Grambling, recently served as the Executive Vice President and  
6 Chief Financial Officer at Maryland Institute College of Art and prior to his service at  
7 Maryland Institute College of Art, Dr. Lemelle was the Executive Vice President and Chief  
8 Operating Officer at Grambling State University from 2016 to 2021, developing extensive  
9 experience in higher education administration and preparing him for his new leadership role  
10 at the university; and

11 WHEREAS, on March 17, 2023, Dr. Aubra J. Gantt, became Chancellor of Southern  
12 University at Shreveport; and

13 WHEREAS, Dr. Gantt began her educational career at SUSLA, where she learned  
14 one of her passions was to serve students, faculty, and staff from various backgrounds; and

15 WHEREAS, Dr. Gantt is a believer in the community college mission because she  
16 is a product of a community college; and

17 WHEREAS, since their establishment 188 years ago, HBCUs have continued to build  
18 a legacy of excellence, achievement, and inclusion; and

19 WHEREAS, HBCUs were created to provide opportunities and access to education  
20 for Black students during a time when institutions of higher education discriminated against  
21 Black Americans; and

22 WHEREAS, the establishment and advancement of HBCUs fostered academic  
23 excellence, cultural empowerment, and professional readiness for Black students throughout  
24 our nation; and

25 WHEREAS, HBCUs play a crucial role in contributing to the economy and  
26 workforce, aligning their academic programs with the needs of industry while ensuring  
27 HBCU graduates meet the demands of the job market; and

28 WHEREAS, HBCU graduates are exemplary public servants, scientists, doctors,  
29 artists, lawyers, judges, engineers, educators, entertainers, business owners, and leaders and  
30 have distinguished themselves in numerous ways, both nationally and in the state as follows:

1           **Dillard University** is recognized for its Ray Charles Program in African American  
2 Material Culture, to which the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation awarded a significant grant  
3 for a multi-year project titled "Higher Learning through Humanities in Food Studies"; and

4           **Grambling State University**, with a legacy spanning nearly 122 years, pioneered  
5 Louisiana's first Doctor of Philosophy program in Criminology and Justice Administration,  
6 receiving student scholarships from Beyoncé's "BeyGood" Foundation that showcase the  
7 institution's commitment to innovation and student support; and

8           **Southern University and A&M College**, a Carnegie Research 2 institution, was  
9 awarded a grant to aid in the pursuit of the Carnegie Research 1 high research activity  
10 designation, and received with the Boeing Co., a joint award from NASA for their combined  
11 work on NASA's Space Launch System (SLS) rocket; and

12           **Southern University at New Orleans** is celebrating sixty-five years of providing  
13 access to educational opportunities for students; is in the process of designing a new nursing  
14 building; recently enrolled its first Cybersecurity cohort this past fall, and formalized an  
15 articulation agreement for a Cybersecurity Degree Pathway with Delgado Community  
16 College to train future cybersecurity practitioners to meet workforce needs in the field of  
17 information technology; and

18           **Southern University Shreveport**, celebrating fifty-six years of providing an  
19 excellent and accessible educational experience to students and programming for its  
20 surrounding community, has acquired a new Mobile Health Unit, which will travel across  
21 Northwest Louisiana providing quality health and dental screenings to underserved  
22 populations and bringing healthcare to communities that would otherwise not receive these  
23 services; and

24           **Southern University Law Center**, a highly ranked legal education institution, has  
25 prospered within the Esports industry, hosting regional and national tournaments in the  
26 newly established Esports Innovation Lab; and

27           **Xavier University of Louisiana**, known for being the top producer of Black  
28 graduates who earn medical degrees, was recently recognized by OnlineU as the  
29 second-ranked HBCU in the nation, with the highest payoff for Black graduates in 2024; and

30           WHEREAS, it is appropriate to commend Louisiana's Historically Black Colleges

1 and Universities for their outstanding achievements and their numerous alumni for their  
2 contributions to their local communities, the state, and the world.

3 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana  
4 does hereby recognize Tuesday, March 19, 2024, as Historically Black Colleges and  
5 Universities Day at the Louisiana State Capitol.

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The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part  
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Dawn Romero Watson.

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DIGEST

SR 11 Original

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