

Regular Session, 2014

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 156

BY REPRESENTATIVES SMITH, BARROW, AND ST. GERMAIN

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the state Department of Education and the governing authority of each public elementary and secondary school to implement certain measures based on the Louisiana Women's Policy and Research Commission's recommendations pertaining to science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education in its 2013 report to the governor.

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Women's Policy and Research Commission, pursuant to R.S. 46:2525, has submitted to the governor its annual report; and

WHEREAS, the commission's 2013 report to the governor addresses the commission's duties: monitoring the status of Louisiana women for the purpose of evaluating their economic, educational, and health concerns, needs, and hardships; identifying and analyzing trends that impact the health and prosperity of Louisiana women; and advising the governor on particular hardships, concerns, and needs that challenge Louisiana women and their possible solutions; and

WHEREAS, one of the main areas of focus in the 2013 report is "Women, Education and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM)"; the commission focused its education research this year on the importance of preparing more female students for college and high-need, high-wage jobs; and

WHEREAS, this aspect of the commission's report focuses on efforts underway in Louisiana to increase the number of girls succeeding in STEM studies and the number of Louisiana women entering STEM career fields, in which the gender wage gap tends to be narrower and the wages higher than in other fields; and

WHEREAS, the report finds that increasing girls' exposure and access to hands-on activities and high-quality science labs and technology can help increase the number of young women pursuing careers in STEM fields and further provides that education leaders

should work to identify new resources to help provide additional skills development opportunities for teachers and students.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the state Department of Education and the governing authority of each public elementary and secondary school to implement the following measures based on the Louisiana Women's Policy and Research Commission's recommendations pertaining to science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education in its 2013 report to the governor:

(1) The legislature urges and requests the state Department of Education to seek funding and public-private partnerships to increase access to technology at all public schools.

(2) The legislature urges and requests the governing authority of each public elementary and secondary school to make capital investments in building and upgrading science labs for middle and high school students a budget priority, to aggressively seek public-private partnerships to increase the availability of professional development opportunities for teachers in the sciences, especially engineering, and to encourage middle and high schools to establish STEM-related clubs for students and actively encourage female students to join them.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the state superintendent of education, the president of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, the executive director of the Louisiana School Boards Association, and the executive director of the Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE