

1 WHEREAS, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, Louisiana has the highest
2 imprisonment rate in the country; and

3 WHEREAS, using 2010 Census data, the Prison Policy Initiative calculated
4 incarceration rates by race and found that African Americans are overrepresented in
5 Louisiana prisons and jails; and

6 WHEREAS, it is important that each eligible Louisiana citizen be able to exercise
7 his right to vote; and

8 WHEREAS, the Voting Rights Act, signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson
9 on August 6, 1965, aimed to overcome legal barriers that prevented African Americans from
10 exercising their right to vote; and

11 WHEREAS, the Voting Rights Act was a landmark piece of federal legislation that
12 ended racial discrimination in voting, enforcing the voting rights for all that are guaranteed
13 by the 14th and 15th Amendments; and

14 WHEREAS, the hard work, determination, and perseverance of civil rights activists
15 across the country helped to make this possible; and

16 WHEREAS, the victory of the Voting Rights Act helped in diversifying the
17 electorate and legislative bodies in government, making these bodies more representative;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, it is important to recognize the immeasurable value one vote can have;
20 and

21 WHEREAS, Terence R. McAuliffe, Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia,
22 recently issued an order restoring the right to vote for individuals who have completed the
23 terms of incarceration and supervised release for any and all felony convictions; and

24 WHEREAS, Governor McAuliffe has pledged going forward to issue monthly orders
25 restoring rights; and

26 WHEREAS, the Louisiana governor is authorized by the Constitution of Louisiana
27 to grant reprieves and under certain circumstances to commute sentences, pardon those
28 convicted of offenses against the state, and remit fines and forfeitures imposed for such
29 offenses.

1 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
2 urge and request the governor of Louisiana to take action to restore voting rights to those in
3 the state who are under an order of imprisonment for conviction of a felony and to work with
4 all stakeholders to ensure more accessibility to voting for those persons who are incarcerated
5 and eligible to vote.

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted
7 to the governor of Louisiana.

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)]

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Hunter

Requests the governor of La. to take action to restore voting rights to those in the state who are under an order of imprisonment for conviction of a felony and to work with all stakeholders to ensure more accessibility to voting for those persons who are incarcerated and eligible to vote.