

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 6

BY SENATOR CATHEY

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To create and provide for the Task Force on Tenure in Public Postsecondary Education.

WHEREAS, the central purposes of postsecondary education are the pursuit of truth, the discovery of new knowledge through scholarship and research, the study and reasoned criticism of intellectual and cultural traditions, the teaching and general development of students to help them become creative individuals and productive citizens, and the transmission of knowledge and learning to society; and

WHEREAS, academic freedom and intellectual diversity, coupled with free inquiry and free speech, are paramount to achieving the central purposes of postsecondary education; and

WHEREAS, tenure policies can deeply impact the central purposes of postsecondary education; and

WHEREAS, the granting of tenure in postsecondary education has historically been aligned with fostering independent thought and the free exchange of new or controversial ideas; and

WHEREAS, tenure policies may provide competent faculty the freedom to perform scholarly research, impart their knowledge, and debate controversial or emerging issues without any political influence or fear of reprisal; and

WHEREAS, postsecondary education students should be confident that they are being exposed to the spectrum of viewpoints, including those that are dissenting; that they are graded solely on the basis of their reasoned answers and appropriate knowledge; and that faculty members are not using their courses for the purposes of political, ideological, religious, or antireligious indoctrination; and

WHEREAS, just as thoughts on academic freedom on other topics are premised on the ideas that knowledge is a never-ending pursuit of truth, that there is no truth that is not in principle open to challenge and change, and that no party or intellectual faction has a monopoly on wisdom, the role of tenure policy in postsecondary education should be

routinely reviewed and discussed.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby establish and provide for the Task Force on Tenure in Public Postsecondary Education to perform an in-depth review of the merits of and need for tenure, to study public postsecondary tenure policies, and to propose any recommendations regarding tenure policies, including any specific proposals for legislation, by written report to the legislature and to the David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library as required by R.S. 24:771 and 772, no later than March 1, 2023.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall consist of the following members:

(1) The president of the Senate or his designee, who shall serve as the chairman of the task force.

(2) The speaker of the House of Representatives or his designee.

(3) The chairman of the Senate Committee on Education or his designee.

(4) The chairman of the House Committee on Education or his designee.

(5) Three members of the Senate appointed by the president of the Senate.

(6) Three members of the House of Representatives appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives.

(7) The commissioner of higher education or his designee.

(8) The president of each public postsecondary education management board or his designee.

(9) A faculty representative from each public postsecondary education management board, selected by the presidents of the faculty senates of each management boards' member institutions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each designating authority shall submit the names of designees to the task force to the secretary of the Senate no later than July 15, 2022.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that no later than August 1, 2022, the chairman of the task force shall convene the first meeting of the task force. At the first meeting, the members may elect a vice chairman and other officers as the task force deems appropriate.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a majority of the task force shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. All official actions of the task force shall require the affirmative vote of a majority of the members.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the task force shall serve without compensation, except per diem or expense reimbursement to which they may be individually entitled as members of their constituent organizations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall terminate on the date of the submission of its report or March 1, 2023, whichever occurs first.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the commissioner of higher education, the president of each public postsecondary education management board, and the president of the Association of Louisiana Faculty Senates.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES