

2025 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 181

BY SENATOR STINE

COMMENDATIONS. To commend the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry (LABI) on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To commend the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry (LABI) on the occasion
3 of its fiftieth anniversary for its outstanding service to Louisiana's business
4 community, promoting free enterprise, and fostering a climate for economic growth
5 through engagement in the political, legislative, judicial, and regulatory processes.

6 WHEREAS, LABI is widely regarded as Louisiana's premier business lobbying
7 organization, and celebrates its fiftieth anniversary in 2025; and

8 WHEREAS, LABI was established on September 4, 1975, by consolidating the
9 Louisiana State Chamber of Commerce, the Louisiana Manufacturers Association, and the
10 Louisiana Political Council, uniting their memberships, resources, and staff; and

11 WHEREAS, LABI's board of directors selected then executive director of the Public
12 Affairs Research Council, Ed Steimel, to lead the organization as its first president; and

13 WHEREAS, the organization's first major task was the herculean challenge of
14 seeking enactment of a Right-to-Work law, an effort many political observers at the time
15 predicted would take years to achieve, yet LABI on its first attempt spearheaded and
16 obtained the successful passage of that law; and

17 WHEREAS, during the latter half of the 1970s, LABI sought to build on this success
18 by expanding its advocacy efforts on issues important to the business community,

1 particularly in the areas of labor and taxation law, and began engaging in legislative
2 elections; and

3 WHEREAS, on three separate occasions when the state's unemployment
4 compensation trust fund became insolvent, LABI played a leadership role in working with
5 the legislature and governor to address the fund's collapse and restoration, preventing a
6 major federal tax increase for Louisiana's businesses in each instance; the first being in the
7 1980s when massive layoffs in Louisiana's oil and gas sector created an \$800 million
8 obligation to the federal unemployment system for loans used to pay benefits; the second
9 occurring after Hurricane Katrina in 2005, which caused the dislocation of workers and their
10 employers in the New Orleans region, generating a federal debt exceeding \$400 million; and
11 finally, in 2020 when the COVID-19 outbreak shut down commerce across the country and
12 forced Louisiana's fund once again into insolvency, resulting in close to \$200 million in
13 federal debt; and

14 WHEREAS, upon Steimel's retirement in 1988, Dan Juneau succeeded him as
15 LABI's president; and

16 WHEREAS, under Juneau's leadership, LABI invested effort in education,
17 championing accountability and choice in addition to helping to create the Community and
18 Technical College System, while developing and bringing about the passage of bills that
19 served to restore an eroding workers' compensation insurance market, as well as those that
20 brought about major legal reform, and finally promoting a reorganization of Louisiana's
21 workforce delivery system to better connect employers and prospective employees; and

22 WHEREAS, in 2013, Stephen Waguespack became LABI president following
23 Juneau's retirement; and

24 WHEREAS, under Waguespack's leadership, LABI defended businesses against
25 numerous and perennial attacks on labor, legal, and taxation fronts, all while playing a
26 pivotal role in the enactment of significant legal and educational improvements; and

27 WHEREAS, in 2023, following Waguespack's departure, Will Green was appointed
28 as his successor; and

29 WHEREAS, under Green's leadership, LABI has honored its legacy while
30 strategically focusing on the future through the implementation of its LA Driven Strategic

1 Plan to advance a vibrant and sustainable business climate in Louisiana by championing free
2 enterprise to create economic opportunities and enhance the quality of life for all citizens;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, LABI has diligently protected Louisiana's businesses against
5 unwarranted governmental disruption to their ability to operate efficiently and productively;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, many LABI alumni staff members have continued their careers working
8 within Louisiana's governmental processes to improve our state; and

9 WHEREAS, LABI has earned numerous awards and national recognition for its work
10 in Louisiana and its leadership in service to other chambers of commerce and manufacturing
11 associations across the United States, in collaboration with its national partners the U.S.
12 Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers; and

13 WHEREAS, for fifty years LABI has served as an able and effective advocate for
14 its members and non-members within Louisiana's business community; those of all sizes,
15 from all business and industry sectors, and from all around the state; and

16 WHEREAS, for five decades, LABI has annually been in the forefront of efforts to
17 improve Louisiana's business environment by advocating for the reformation and
18 stabilization of the state's budget and tax systems, correcting inequities in its civil justice
19 system, strengthening its energy sector, enhancing its education and training delivery and
20 outcomes, safeguarding employers' ability to provide employment opportunities for workers,
21 and advocating on so many other issues too numerous to recite in this Resolution, all for the
22 purpose of promoting business investment and job growth within our state.

23 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana
24 does hereby extend its sincere congratulations and best wishes to the Louisiana Association
25 of Business and Industry on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary and commends its five
26 decades of outstanding service and accomplishments in support of the state of Louisiana and
27 its business community.

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Mr.
29 Will Green, President of LABI.

