

Regular Session, 2011

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 70

BY REPRESENTATIVE STIAES

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Recovery School District to study jointly the feasibility of building a high school at the site of the former Alfred Lawless High School in the Lower Ninth Ward of the city of New Orleans and to submit jointly a written report of findings and recommendations, as well as an account of the use of hurricane recovery funds with respect to the repair and reconstruction of schools in the Lower Ninth Ward, to the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education not later than sixty days prior to the beginning of the 2012 Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana.

WHEREAS, Alfred Lawless High School, known also as Lawless High School, was located in the 5300 block of Law Street in the Lower Ninth Ward of New Orleans, just a few blocks from one of the levee breaches during Hurricane Katrina along the Industrial Canal; and

WHEREAS, Lawless High School suffered catastrophic damage in Hurricane Katrina, and after the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) deemed it sufficiently damaged, the school was demolished; and

WHEREAS, many residents of the Lower Ninth Ward were devastated by the razing of the school, which was a true neighborhood institution and was deeply beloved by its students, faculty, staff, and alumni and by the community as a whole; and

WHEREAS, Lawless High School opened in the early 1960s and served grades eight through twelve, and before Hurricane Katrina, it served approximately eight hundred students; and

WHEREAS, building a school, viewed by many as the cornerstone of a community, certainly would reinforce this unique neighborhood's passionate and steadfast revitalization efforts; and

WHEREAS, in addition to meeting the educational needs of the community, building a high school at this historic site would serve as a welcome and hopeful example of the ongoing restoration and rebuilding that is possible throughout the Lower Ninth Ward, the city of New Orleans, and all hurricane-affected areas in Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, there is both a strong need and strong community support for the rebuilding of a high school in this neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the community members' deep desire for the rebuilding of a school in this location, there is widespread concern among community residents about the use of hurricane recovery monies with respect to the repair and reconstruction of area schools; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate and necessary that the feasibility of building a high school at the site of the former Alfred Lawless High School receive a thorough examination; and

WHEREAS, it is also critical that the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Recovery School District account for hurricane recovery monies, particularly FEMA funds, in order to explain how such monies have been, are being, and will be used relative to schools in the Lower Ninth Ward.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Recovery School District to study jointly the feasibility of building a high school at the site of the former Alfred Lawless High School in the Lower Ninth Ward of the city of New Orleans and to submit jointly, in compliance with R.S. 24:771 and 772, a written report of findings and recommendations to the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education not later than sixty days prior to the beginning of the 2012 Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that such report shall include a detailed account of the use of any and all hurricane recovery monies, including but not limited to Federal Emergency Management Agency funds, with respect to the repair and reconstruction of schools in the Lower Ninth Ward of New Orleans.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the president of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, to the superintendent of the Recovery School District, and to the state superintendent of education.

---

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

---

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE