

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 168

BY SENATOR NEVERS

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Board of Regents to study the increase in costs for textbooks and other instructional materials required of students attending Louisiana public colleges and universities as well as the steady increase in the total amounts that students must pay for such items and recommend both short and long term actions that can be taken by the legislature, the Board of Regents, the public postsecondary education management boards, and students to increase the affordability of such materials and supplies for all students, but particularly for students from low and moderate income families; to provide study guidelines; and to provide for a written report on study findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

WHEREAS, there is a growing concern on the part of students, parents, faculty members and administrators, and legislators over the increase in costs for textbooks and other instructional materials required of students attending Louisiana public colleges and universities as well as the steady increase in the total amounts that students must pay for such items; and

WHEREAS, according to national information supplied by the Board of Regents:

(1) It is estimated that the cost for books and supplies for a first-time, full-time student at a public college or university that grants academic degrees at the baccalaureate level is the equivalent of 26% of the cost of tuition and fees for such student and is the equivalent of 76 % of the cost of tuition and fees for such a student at a community college.

(2) Since 1994, the cost of textbooks has risen at almost twice the rate of inflation for all finished goods; and

WHEREAS, the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance, an entity created by the United States Congress to provide an independent source of advice and counsel to its members and to the U.S. Secretary of Education on student financial aid policy, released a report in May 2007 entitled *Turn the Page: Making College Textbooks More Affordable*; and

WHEREAS, the advisory committee's report included the following conclusions:

(1) A variety of actions is underway across the country to lower the burden on students and parents of yearly outlays for textbooks and learning materials.

(2) In the short term, steps must be taken to increase affordability for all students, but especially for those from low and moderate income families.

(3) In the long term, a supply-driven, producer-centric market must be transformed into a demand-driven, college-and student-centric market.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Board of Regents to study the increase in costs for textbooks and other instructional materials required of students attending Louisiana public colleges and universities as well as the steady increase in the total amounts that students must pay for such items and recommend both short and long term actions that can be taken by the legislature, the Board of Regents, the public postsecondary education management boards, and students to increase the affordability of such materials and supplies for all students, but particularly for students from low and moderate income families.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that such study shall include but need not be limited to a review of recent successful actions taken by states and by public postsecondary institutions throughout the country to lower the burden on students and parents of yearly expenditures for required textbooks and instructional materials and to restrain future cost increases as well as a review of the recommendations made on such matters by the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance in its May 2007 report entitled *Turn The Page: Making College Textbooks More Affordable*.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Regents shall report in writing on study findings, recommendations, and conclusions to the House Committee on Education not later than sixty days prior to the convening of the 2009 Regular Session.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the chairman of the Board of Regents and to the Commissioner of Higher Education.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE