

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 136

BY SENATOR JACKSON

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Senate Committee on Finance and the House Committee on Appropriations to meet and function as a joint committee to review the laws, rules, policies, practices, processes, and staff and other resources involved in developing and implementing legislative priorities for the appropriation of funds and to make recommendations for the improvement and enhancement thereof and related matters.

WHEREAS, Article IV, Section 5(D) and Article VII, Section 11(A) of the Constitution of Louisiana requires the governor to submit to the legislature an operating budget and a capital budget which includes a budget estimate for the next fiscal year setting forth all proposed state expenditures including a recommendation for appropriations from the state general fund and from dedicated funds, which shall not exceed the official forecast of the Revenue Estimating Conference and the expenditure limit for the fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, under Article VII, Section 11(B) and (C) of the constitution, the governor is to cause to be submitted to the legislature a general appropriation bill for proposed ordinary operating expenditures in conformity with the recommendations for appropriations contained in the budget estimate and a proposed five-year capital outlay program and request implementation of the first year of the program; and

WHEREAS, while the governor is required to submit his proposed executive operating budget, capital budget, and an appropriation bill, under Article III of the Constitution of Louisiana, the exclusive power to appropriate is vested in the Louisiana Legislature and, except as otherwise provided by the constitution, a specific appropriation by the legislature is required to withdraw money from the state treasury; the general appropriation bill must be itemized and contain only appropriations for the ordinary operating expenses of government, public charities, pensions, and the public debt or interest thereon, and all other bills for appropriating money must be for a specific purpose and amount; and

WHEREAS, it is incumbent upon the legislature in the exercise of its constitutional authority and responsibility that the appropriation of state funds be done according to priorities determined by the legislature; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of the need for fiscal services support, the legislature created the legislative fiscal office to provide service, research and technical staff assistance concerning fiscal matters of any kind to the members of the legislature and to the committees thereof; and

WHEREAS, the stated duties and functions of the legislative fiscal office includes:

(1) Developing and making available to the legislature and its committees such fiscal information as will assist the legislature or any legislative committee in its deliberations with the view of pointing out unnecessary programs, projects, and functions; calling attention to inefficient and uneconomical practices; monitoring, reviewing, and analyzing the performance of state agencies; making recommendations for improvement; and carrying out other similar functions.

(2) Continuously reviewing existing and proposed programs and budgets of state agencies.

(3) Reviewing and evaluating requests for appropriations, including proposed plans and policies related to such requests, and make presentations to the House Appropriations Committee, the Senate Finance Committee, and the legislature in relation thereto.

(4) Analyzing the annual budget prepared by the executive branch and making recommendations to the legislature and committees with respect thereto.

(5) Performing in-depth studies of programs or statewide policies including studies of a program's accomplishments, the manner in which a program's appropriation has been expended, and the future direction of a program.

(6) Analyzing and making recommendations reflecting capital budget requests.

(7) Making continuous short and long range studies of projected revenues and expenditures.

(8) Making recommendations to the legislature with respect to procedures and policies to effectuate legislative performances of the functions of budget analysis and review, capital budget study, fiscal policy, fiscal research, departmental operation, efficiency

within state government, and other problems and matters related thereto.

(9) Developing and maintaining a comprehensive information system on the receipt of revenues by local governmental subdivisions and political subdivisions from local, state, and federal sources, as well as the expenditure of these revenues and to submit a summary of this information annually to the legislature; and

WHEREAS, each house of the legislature employs professional staff to provide similar fiscal services to the body and its committees and members; and

WHEREAS, as the legislature is constitutionally required to appropriate funds to fund the state's operating budget and capital budget, a review of the laws, rules, policies, practices, processes, and staff and other resources involved in developing and implementing legislative priorities for the appropriation of funds is appropriate and warranted.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana hereby urges and requests the Senate Committee on Finance and the House Committee on Appropriations to meet and function as a joint committee to review the laws, rules, policies, practices, processes, and staff and other resources involved in developing and implementing legislative priorities for the appropriation of funds and to make recommendations for the improvement and enhancement of developing and implementing such legislative priorities and related matters.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the joint committee shall submit a written report of its findings and recommendations to the legislature on or before March 1, 2009.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES