

Regular Session, 2014

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 220

BY REPRESENTATIVE PRICE

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to reconvene a minimum foundation program (MFP) task force to determine the actual cost of providing public education in Louisiana and identify all potential funding mechanisms to enable school systems to meet this cost and to submit a written report of findings and recommendations to the House Committee on Education not later than February 1, 2015.

WHEREAS, the Constitution of Louisiana requires that the legislature provide for the education of the people of the state and further requires that the legislature establish and maintain a public education system; and

WHEREAS, the Constitution of Louisiana further provides that it is the goal of the public education system to provide learning environments and experiences at all stages of human development that are humane, just, and designed to promote excellence in order that every individual may be afforded an equal opportunity to develop to his full potential; and

WHEREAS, the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) has the constitutional responsibility of annually developing, adopting, and submitting to the legislature for its approval and funding a formula to be used to determine the cost of a minimum foundation program of education in all public elementary and secondary schools as well as to equitably allocate the funds to local school systems; and

WHEREAS, the constitution provides that the legislature may not amend the formula that is adopted by the board and submitted to the legislature for its consideration but may only return an unsatisfactory formula to the board along with recommendations to the board for an amended formula; and

WHEREAS, for the purpose of providing BESE with advisory recommendations for the MFP formula for 2014-2015 and beyond, BESE formed an MFP task force that met from September of 2013 through January of 2014; and

WHEREAS, on January 6, 2014, the task force held its final meeting and adopted several recommendations, including a 2.75 percent rate increase in 2014-2015 base per pupil amount funding, additional funding for career education and special education, expanded course opportunities, a technology readiness overview for each school district, and a study of the MFP formula by financial and policy experts in order to restructure it for greater clarity, accountability, efficiency, and effectiveness; and

WHEREAS, there is concern among some education stakeholders that the task force did not successfully determine the actual cost of educating Louisiana's students, and they have expressed that this determination is an essential part of ensuring that the MFP formula meets the needs of students and the school systems that educate them and is a question that warrants further study; and

WHEREAS, in order to fulfill the state's constitutional duty of affording every student an equal opportunity to develop to his full potential, it is imperative that there be continued study of certain issues relative to the minimum foundation program formula so that determinations can be made as to how the state can best provide experiences and opportunities to students that help them succeed in all aspects of life.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to reconvene a minimum foundation program (MFP) task force to determine the actual cost of providing public education in Louisiana and identify all potential funding mechanisms to enable school systems to meet this cost and to submit a written report of findings and recommendations to the House Committee on Education not later February 1, 2015.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the membership of the task force include but not be limited to individuals representing BESE, the state Department of Education, the Louisiana School Boards Association, the Louisiana Association of School Superintendents, the Louisiana Association of School Business Officers, Council for a Better Louisiana, the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry, the Louisiana Association of Public Charter

Schools, the Louisiana Association of Educators, the Louisiana Federation of Teachers, and the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council.

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

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES