

## **Board of Regents 2016 Legislative Agenda**

### **1. HB 788 and 789 by Rep. Jefferson**

State funding to higher education institutions has declined drastically during 2009-2015. During the same period, however, there has been a sharp increase in the mandated costs that the institutions pay to the state. HB 766 by Rep. Adams granted certain operational autonomies to postsecondary institutions, but did not grant relief from the substantial increase in audit costs paid to the legislative auditor and insurance costs paid to the state Office of Risk Management.

HB 788, if passed, will allow institutions to choose to participate in ORM without requiring them to do so, until July 1, 2020. HB 789, if passed, will require the legislative auditor to accept an independent auditor's report submitted by postsecondary institutions (similar to local governmental entities). Current law allows, but doesn't require, the legislative auditor to do so.

These two bills are necessary to contain the mandated costs postsecondary institutions pay to the state, especially in these times of great financial distress.

### **2. HB 842 by Broadwater**

Currently LOSFA, LUMCON and the MediFund are placed within the Board of Regents, but are governed by a separate intermediate governing board. This bill eliminates the separate governing boards, i.e., LASFAC, the LUMCON Executive Board, and the MediFund Board, and transfers LOSFA, LUMCON and the MediFund, respectively, to the Board of Regents. We have been asked to propose efficiency measures, and this appears to be a low-hanging fruit. Furthermore, the Board of Regents is the entity with policy-making authority over financial aid, and LOSFA administers financial aid programs. Placing LOSFA within the Regents also harmonizes the policy and administration of such programs.

### **3. HB 507 by Leger**

As PAR and other independent groups have repeatedly noted, the current higher education governance structure is not serving Louisiana's interests and needs. While there is no guaranteed correlation between the governance model and desired outcomes, for a coordinated model such as Louisiana's to work, the coordinating board must have the authority necessary to implement its policies and goals. Louisiana's higher education model is fractured and prevents implementation of any statewide, comprehensive vision for improving higher education, because it lacks the necessary clarity to make the coordinating board's authority enforceable. However, a massive restructuring, such as a single-board proposal, does not guarantee any outcomes and can be costly and chaotic. The current ambiguity in critical areas should be eliminated and the Board of Regents' constitutional authority in the areas of planning, coordination and budgeting should be clarified as enforceable, to ensure implementation of its master plan and funding formula. HB 597 is a reasonable compromise between the various single-board bills filed and the status quo.

### **4. HB 828 by Rep. Harris**

This bill, if enacted, will require K-12 to pay for dual enrollment and remedial education classes taught by colleges. Until 2012 or so, DOE used to pay colleges and universities for dual enrollment classes, but stopped the practice in 2012. Dual enrollment and remedial education courses are appropriately funded out of K-12 funding, and will appropriately reflect the service higher education is providing to K-12 students.