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Date: November 29, 2011

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## **Governance Commission Adopts Recommendations**

BATON ROUGE, La – Twenty-one (21) recommendations were adopted today by the Governance Commission studying higher education in Louisiana and will be included in a final report to the Legislature.

Organized into four broad categories (budget, formula and efficiencies; articulation and transfer; tuition and financial aid; and governance) the key recommendations include:

- Clarifying the Board of Regents' constitutional and statutory authority making it the entity accountable for higher education performance. (In lieu of a creating a single governing board)
- Identifying the Board of Regents funding formula as both a sound recommendation tool and a required distribution model for systems and institutions.
- Granting tuition authority to higher education management boards through a tuition policy to be set by Regents, eliminating the need for a 2/3 vote of the Legislature.
- Decoupling TOPS from the actual cost of tuition.
- Repackaging need-based GO Grants to provide eligible students at least 55% of their total need when added to other forms of financial aid.
- Aligning institutions to the appropriate management system legislatively based on recommended role, scope and mission statements developed by the Board of Regents.

“The clear message we received from the legislative authors of the resolution creating this commission is that stronger accountability and efficiency is critical to the future success of postsecondary education and we certainly concur,” said Governance Commission Chairman Greg Davis. “These recommendations warrant immediate consideration and action by the Louisiana Legislature and the higher education community in order to better serve our state’s citizens.”

“This is our chance to break out from the shackles of the past,” said Board of Regents Chairman and Commission Member Robert Levy. “These bold recommendations allow us to see if we can’t do things better. It gives the legislature and the executive branch the ability to hold one board accountable—the Board of Regents—and we look forward to leading the charge to implement the policies this robust commission has endorsed.”

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## **PAGE 2-GOVERNANCE COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Governance Commission, established as a result of House Concurrent Resolution 184 of the 2011 Legislative Session, has been meeting monthly since August and was charged with submitting recommendations to the Legislature no later than sixty days prior to the beginning of the next session.

“This commission has acted with great fidelity and concern for what really matters—providing quality higher education opportunities that assist students in achieving the American dream of a college degree,” said Commissioner of Higher Education Jim Purcell. “I think these strategic recommendations, if adopted by the Legislature, will increase our transparency, boost the performance of our colleges and universities, and create the authority necessary for the Board of Regents to drive the improvements our citizens and policy makers demand.”

“We chose to make recommendations we believe will positively impact higher education in meaningful ways and shake up the status quo,” said Commission Member Barry Erwin. “What is clearly needed is not a new board structure, but clarity in responsibility and strengthened accountability to improve the overall educational attainment of our state. We heard time and time again from the national experts there is not a ‘magic bullet’ when it comes to governing structures and no evidence could be found indicating it would save money or increase performance. Instead, it led to finger pointing and unclear lines of authority which can be eliminated by this body’s action.”

A full listing of all 21 recommendations adopted by the commission will be posted at <http://www.regents.la.gov/index.cfm?md=pagebuilder&tmp=home&pid=15&pnid=0&nid=4>.

A final meeting of the Governance Commission is scheduled for Tuesday, January 3, 2012 so that a final report can be approved by the membership. This allows the commission to meet the deadline of January 12, 2012 established in HCR 184 for delivery of a set of recommendations to the Legislature.

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