

2015 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 97

BY SENATOR CLAITOR

COMMENDATIONS. Commends John L. Bennett for more than thirty years of outstanding accomplishments in education, particularly as principal of St. Aloysius Catholic School, and for his dedicated public service as a member of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To commend and congratulate John L. Bennett for more than thirty years of outstanding
3 accomplishments in education, his inspiring leadership of the faculty and students
4 of St. Aloysius Catholic School and for his dedicated public service as a member of
5 the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

6 WHEREAS, John L. Bennett, a native and resident of Port Allen, Louisiana, has
7 announced his retirement as principal of St. Aloysius Catholic School in Baton Rouge at the
8 end of this school term, after serving as principal of the school for the last thirty years; and

9 WHEREAS, he attended Holy Family School in Port Allen in elementary school,
10 graduated from Redemptorist High School in Baton Rouge, achieved bachelor's and master's
11 degrees in education from Louisiana State University, earned an education specialist degree
12 from LSU, and attained a master's in pastoral studies from Loyola University; and

13 WHEREAS, John Bennett began his career in education as a teacher at Port Allen
14 High School in 1977, in 1980 was named the assistant principal of instruction at Port Allen
15 Middle School, and in 1985, became principal of St. Aloysius Catholic School; and

16 WHEREAS, he is a licensed marriage and family therapist and a licensed
17 professional counselor; and

18 WHEREAS, in 2014, he was selected, as one of three principals of Catholic schools

1 nationwide, to receive a Distinguished Principal Award from the National Association of
2 Elementary School Principals; and

3 WHEREAS, he was twice appointed to serve on the State Board of Elementary and
4 Secondary Education by Governor Bobby Jindal as the nonpublic school at-large member
5 from 2008 to 2013; and

6 WHEREAS, he is a member of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum
7 Development, the National Middle School Association, the American Association of School
8 Administrators, the National Association for the Education of Young Children, and the
9 National Catholic Education Association; and

10 WHEREAS, as principal he carried out the stated mission of St. Aloysius Catholic
11 School - to educate the whole child in the Catholic tradition for a life of meaning and
12 purpose; and

13 WHEREAS, John Bennett has been the guiding force in the implementation of the
14 school philosophy:

15 "The primary purpose of St. Aloysius School is to prepare our children for life in a
16 contemporary society. We strive to help each child achieve his/her maximum potential in
17 spiritual, intellectual, social, artistic, and physical development. St. Aloysius focuses on
18 providing a Catholic Christian community atmosphere of faith and love. Students are
19 afforded opportunities to experience the presence of God in their lives, to strengthen their
20 personal faith through worship experiences, and to develop moral and social conscience
21 through service to others while growing in a sense of tolerance and understanding. To attain
22 these goals, major emphasis is placed on the fact that each child is an individual with
23 specific needs, interests, and abilities. In recognition of these individual differences, a wide
24 range of learning experiences is provided to develop the positive aspects of each child's
25 character."; and

26 WHEREAS, he fosters a sense of partnership among faculty, staff and the (church)
27 parish and calls the school, its 1,194 students and over 100 faculty and staff, 67 of them
28 teachers, a ministry of the St. Aloysius Catholic Church Parish; and

29 WHEREAS, he and the faculty bring fun and humor into their students' education,
30 ranging from dressing up at Halloween, to playing music in the cafeteria, to bringing parents

1 in for a major assembly on the first day of school complete with "song and dance and play
2 and humor" while also serving as models of Christian and family values in school; and

3 WHEREAS, John Bennett meets with student advisers on a regular basis to discuss
4 issues and the advisory board's students produced a school safety video that won a national
5 award; and

6 WHEREAS, he and his wife, Debra, who teaches kindergarten at St. Aloysius
7 Catholic School, married in 1976 and the family includes daughters Lindsey and husband
8 Derek Templet, Lauren and husband Patrick O'Brien, and Lee Anne Bennett, together with
9 seven grandchildren, and he plans to spend his retirement enjoying time with his
10 grandchildren while doing volunteer work at St. Aloysius Catholic Church Parish and
11 School.

12 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does
13 hereby commend and congratulate John L. Bennett for more than thirty years of
14 distinguished and exemplary service to education in Louisiana, particularly as principal of
15 St. Aloysius Catholic School, and for his dedicated public service as a member of the State
16 Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and does recognize and record his notable
17 accomplishments and manifold contributions to his community and the state, as well as the
18 generous and admirable way in which he has devoted his energy and his talents to the full
19 development of students into informed, capable, and productive citizens of their
20 communities and the world.

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to
22 John L. Bennett.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Jerry J. Guillot.

SR 97 Original

DIGEST
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Claitor

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