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NEWLY CREATED HBCU ADVISORY COUNCIL SETS FIRST MEETING

At the urging of District 4 State Senator Wesley Bishop, the Louisiana legislature approved, and the governor signed, Senate Bill 199 to create the Advisory Council on Historically Black Colleges and Universities. SB 199, now Act 236, is an effort to strengthen the capacity of Louisiana HBCUs to participate in federal and state programs, Louisiana's workforce, and economic development opportunities.

The Advisory Council on Historically Black Colleges and Universities is under the jurisdiction of the Board of Regents and is composed of 23 members. The council will provide guidance and advice to the commissioner of higher education and the Board regarding best practices to increase opportunities, financial stability and public awareness at Louisiana's HBCUs.

"While HBCUs represent only 3 percent of colleges in the United States, they educate over 20 million students in the country every year," said Senator Bishop. "Our HBCUs play a critical role in Louisiana's future. It is my hope that this bill will ensure that these colleges and universities have all the tools they need to make this future a bright one."

The first meeting of the HBCU Advisory Council is set for Thursday, August 30th and will be hosted by the Millie M. Charles School of Social Work at Southern University at New Orleans. Members of the council will elect a chairman and vice chairman as well as set the council's goals for the upcoming year.

"The Louisiana Legislature should be commended for creating a council whose sole focus is to improve the academic, public relations and workforce/economic development performance of both its public and private HBCU's and its graduates," said Dr. Lisa Mims-Devezin, Chancellor, Southern University at New Orleans. "These institutions are vital to the educational attainment of many Louisiana citizens, particularly African-Americans. I'm happy to partner in this worthwhile initiative."

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