

Faculty Senate Resolution 09–09

“Retirement Plan Options Appropriate for Higher Education Professionals”

Introduced by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee at the Request of the LSU System Council of Faculty Advisors and of the Association of Louisiana Faculty Senates

WHEREAS the Teachers’ Retirement System of Louisiana (TRSL), the sole governing body for retirement plans for professional employees of Louisiana higher education institutions, has peremptorily reduced the portion of employer contributions that reach employee retirement accounts in the “Optional Retirement Program” (ORP) by 18%;

WHEREAS higher education is represented by only one of fifteen members on the TRSL Board of Trustees;

WHEREAS comparable higher education institutions nationwide offer optional retirement plans both designed for and within the influence of their beneficiaries (for example, by creating a plan administered by a university and its members);

WHEREAS the use of monies derived from employer contributions to service unfunded liabilities or other obligations not incurred by members of the higher education community amounts to a “surcharge on choice” and a form of taxation without representation or benefit;

WHEREAS the retirement and other benefit packages offered by Louisiana higher education institutions are already among the lowest in the nation, a situation that depresses morale and impairs both the recruitment of promising faculty members and the retention of current faculty members, thereby harming the reputation of our universities;

WHEREAS multitudinous Louisiana academic institutions (both within and without the LSU System) have expressed concern and outrage at actions by both the TRSL and the Louisiana government that have diminished retirement benefits to deep historic lows;

WHEREAS several Louisiana institutions have called upon LSU to provide leadership in the defense and the advancement of retirement packages;

WHEREAS the debate over retirement contributions and options is a uniquely bipartisan event in that administrators are affected by “ORP” cuts as frequently as are faculty members;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the LSU Faculty Senate affirms its solidarity with the professional faculty and staff of the many and various public higher education institutions in Louisiana; that it calls on its President and officers to continue working vigorously with other faculty leaders to regain a reasonable and proper measure of control over its retirement program options; that it regards the present system and its offerings as substandard and inadequate to the needs of professionals; and that it regards the present system as unfair, subject to capricious political influence, and, in sum, unacceptable.