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## **SUPERBOARD FOR HIGHER EDUCATION: THE ONLY SOLUTION?**

by

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A superboard for public higher education has become a perennial legislative issue. This year is no exception. Four proposed constitutional amendments have been introduced to create a single board and abolish the three management boards--LSU, Southern and Trustees.

All four proposals would keep authority now held by the Board of Regents and add to it. One of the proposals, HB 153, would retain the Board of Regents and give it more power to coordinate, but delegate management responsibility to campus heads instead of management boards or a single board.

The higher education board structure among the 50 states is mixed: 23 states have a single board, 23 states have a coordinating board, and four states have no statewide board. There is no correlation between quality institutions and board structure, since there are states with highly rated state universities in each group.

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A single board could expedite attainment of a more rational, quality system of public higher education--but only if other essential factors exist. Board members, their officers and campus heads must be of high calibre and committed to quality education. The funding level must be high enough to acquire quality faculty, graduate students, facilities and equipment. The board must be able to withstand unwise political pressures of a governor or the Legislature.

If the present management boards are continued, the Board of Regents needs more authority to make tough decisions. This includes authority to assure its recommended funding formula is maintained and funds are distributed equitably according to the formula; to stop new projects of low priority that will cause unduly high future costs, and to establish statewide student policies on selective admissions and tuition.