



Brandt ready to retire as head of PAR

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BATON ROUGE (AP) - A well-known government watchdog group in Baton Rouge is about to begin the search for a new leader.

Jim Brandt has announced his retirement as president of the Public Affairs Research Council after 11 years in that post. Brandt will step down as head of PAR - a private, nonpartisan research group - at the end of the year.

In a news release Thursday, PAR said a transition committee has been set up to find the group's next president. James Richardson, a professor of economics at LSU and a former PAR board chairman, will head the transition committee.

"The challenges Louisiana face are diverse and complex, and PAR continues to play an important role in defining and disseminating solution-focused research," Brandt said in the news release. "I am honored to have been part of it." Brandt was appointed president of

PAR in May 1999. During that time, he led development of a \$3 million permanent endowment fund for research. He also served as president of the Board of Trustees for the national Governmental Research Association. He is the second-longest-serving president of the 60-year-old organization.

Before joining PAR, Brandt served for 12 years as president and CEO of the Bureau of Governmental Research in New Orleans. According to PAR, Brandt has written more than 75 studies or reports on government finance, state and local tax issues, public administration and government structure and organization.

"Jim has done an excellent job building PAR's reputation and leaves behind him a very capable team," said Donna Saurage, PAR's board chairman.