

LOUISIANA STATE SENATE

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Sen. Ken Hollis
Chairman
Sen. Mike Smith
Vice Chairman
Sen. Mike Branch
Sen. Wilson Fields
Sen. Francis Heitmeier
Sen. Louis Lambert
Sen. Michael Robichaux



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COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION COMMITTEE

JOINT SUBCOMMITTEE ON TOURISM

Minutes of Meeting
1997 Interim
November 18, 1997
Old Centenary Inn
Jackson, Louisiana

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative John Travis called the meeting to order at 10:45 a.m. at the Old Centenary Inn in Jackson, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Mike Branch
Senator Wilson Fields
Senator Mike Smith

Representative John Travis, Co-Chairman
Representative Naomi Farve
Representative Mickey Frith
Representative Herman Hill
Representative Mike Michot
Representative Arthur Morrell
Representative Tank Powell
Representative Sharon Weston
Representative Diane Winston

MEMBERS ABSENT

Senator Ken Hollis
Senator Francis Heitmeier
Senator Louis Lambert
Senator Mike Robichaux
Representative Bob Barton
Representative Dan Flavin
Representative Ed Murray
Representative Gil Pinac
Representative Pete Schneider

Representative Heulette Fontenot
Representative Steve Scalise

III. STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Kevin Hayes, Senate Attorney
Betty Marsh, Senate Secretary
Cindy Mancuso, House Attorney
Sandy Painting, House Secretary
Lawrence Carter, Senate Sergeant at Arms
Danny Leming, House Sergeant at Arms

IV. DISCUSSION

Representative Travis opened the meeting by explaining to the visitors present the reasons for the establishment of the Joint Subcommittee on Tourism and the purpose of the meetings.

Mr. Jerry Smith, East Feliciana Parish Tourist Commission/Asphodel Inn, 4626 Hwy 68, Jackson, LA 70748, (504) 654-6868, appeared before the committee. He expressed his appreciation to the committee for taking the time to hold these meetings. He stated that state funding was very important to the parish because it was a relatively poor rural parish. He requested the committee consider more funding for his area. Also of concern was the bad condition of the highway system. He voiced concern that chip trucks with Mississippi license plates are major factors in the deterioration of Hwy 68 in his area. He requested that the committee find a way to slow the trucks, and perhaps install a weigh station to prevent the overweight problem.

Mr. Rupert G. Thompson, Feliciana Cellars Winery, P.O. Box 369, Jackson, LA, 70748, (504) 634-7982, appeared before the committee and stated that the main concern of the wine industry in Louisiana was the problem of shipping. He stated that wine cannot be shipped out of their building. It must be carried out or have a wholesaler pick it up or they can hire someone like a motor freight to carry the shipment, which is too costly. He said that present law allows wineries from out-of-state to ship into the state. In order to give in-state wineries some relief, he requested that the legislators pass legislation during the next session to make it legal for the wineries to ship their product in state via UPS, the USA mail, etc.

Mr. Leroy Harvey, Feliciana Chamber/Harvey Enterprises, no address given, (504)634-7397 appeared before the committee and stated, as a follow-up to Mr. Thompson, that what was also needed was a reciprocal agreement between states that ship into Louisiana.

Mr. Dwight Landreneau, Assistant Secretary, Ms. Elinor Cravan, and Mr. Randall G. Trahan, Office of State Parks, P.O. Box 44426, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (504) 342-8111, appeared before the committee to discuss how state parks fits into the tourism business and how state parks fits into the Dept. Of Culture, Recreation and Tourism. Mr. Landreneau stated that the objectives of the Office of State Parks are focused on preserving, protecting, educating and interpreting unique and important natural and cultural resources of the state of Louisiana. He stated that the state park system currently consists of about 36,000 acres. He presented the committee with a packet of information regarding the state park system in Louisiana. Mr. Trahan answered questions and explained the State Parks Master Plan for 1997-2012. Ms. Cravan spoke on public input into the proposals of the Master Plan.

Mr. Leroy Harvey again addressed the committee presenting some of the history of Centenary College and other places of interest in the area. He also asked the legislators for help on the Zachary Taylor Parkway Project. He stated his criticism on the actions of DOTD and the highway system in Louisiana.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

The committee toured the Oakley House/Audubon State Commemorative Area, the Bluffs on Thompson Creek, and the Old Centenary Inn prior to the meeting.

VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Representative Travis stated that upon adjournment, the committee would continue its tour with a visit to the Feliciana Cellars Winery in Jackson followed by lunch at Bear Corners. The committee would then depart for a tour of the Myrtles Plantation in St. Francisville and a tour of other homes and the St. Francisville Historic District., followed by a hearing at Hemingbough in St. Francisville.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Travis, Co-chairman

Date Approved: _____