

## House Committee on Municipal, Parochial and Cultural Affairs

Minutes of Meeting  
2014 Regular Session  
April 30, 2014

### I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Austin J. Badon, Jr., chairman of the House Committee on Municipal, Parochial and Cultural Affairs, called the meeting to order at 9:44 a.m. in Room 6, in the State Capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The secretary called the roll.

### II. ROLL CALL

#### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Austin J. Badon, Jr., Chairman  
Representative Robert E. Billiot, Vice Chair  
Representative Taylor F. Barras  
Representative Regina Ashford Barrow  
Representative John A. Berthelot  
Representative Wesley T. Bishop  
Representative Jared C. Brossett  
Representative Terry R. Brown  
Representative Roy A. Burrell  
Representative Michael E. Danahay  
Representative Kenneth E. Havard  
Representative Dalton W. Honoré  
Representative Barbara M. Norton  
Representative Stephen J. Ortego  
Representative Stephen E. Pugh  
Representative Thomas P. Willmott  
Representative Ebony Woodruff

#### MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

#### **STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Tina Righteous, Committee Attorney  
Valarie Banks, Committee Secretary  
Renita McKnight, Committee Clerk  
David Gauthier, Central Staff Legislative Analyst

**ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:**

Candace Pointer, Sergeant at Arms  
Joyce Trotter, Sergeant at Arms

**III. DISCUSSION OF LEGISLATION**

**Senate Bill No. 206 by Senator John Smith**

At the request of Senator John Smith, Representative Dorothy Sue Hill presented Senate Bill No. 206, which designates the mayhaw fruit tree as the official state fruit tree.

Representative Pugh offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 206 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 206 was reported favorably by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Badon, Billiot, Wesley Bishop, Brossett, Brown, Danahay, Havard, Honoré, Norton, Pugh, Willmott, and Woodruff voted yea.

**House Bill No. 489 by Representative Wesley Bishop**

Chairman Badon announced that House Bill No. 489, a constitutional amendment that authorizes the donation of certain blighted or abandoned housing property to the residents of the Lower Ninth Ward of the city of New Orleans, had been voluntarily deferred by the author.

**House Bill No. 1001 by Representative Wesley Bishop**

Chairman Badon announced that House Bill No. 1001, which authorizes the city of New Orleans to sell blighted property in the Lower Ninth Ward for a fixed price, had been voluntarily deferred by the author.

**House Bill No. 1144 by Representative Jared Brossett**

Chairman Badon announced that House Bill No. 1144, which provides relative to fees charged by the Louisiana Housing Corporation, had been voluntarily deferred by the author.

**Senate Bill No. 387 by Senator LaFleur**

Chairman Badon announced that Senate Bill No. 387, which provides relative to local governing authorities and special districts, had been voluntarily deferred by the author.

**Senate Bill No. 590 by Senator Morrell**

At the request of Senator Morrell, Representative Jared Brossett presented Senate Bill No. 590, which provides relative to the Oak Island Neighborhood Improvement District.

Representative Wesley Bishop offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 590 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 590 was reported favorably by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Badon, Billiot, Wesley Bishop, Brossett, Brown, Danahay, Havard, Honoré, Norton, Pugh, Willmott, and Woodruff voted yea.

**Senate Bill No. 572 by Senator Murray**

On behalf of Senator Murray, Rep. Brossett presented Senate Bill No. 572, which provides relative to the Lakeview Crime Prevention District.

Representative Brown offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 572 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 572 was reported favorably by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Badon, Billiot, Wesley Bishop, Brossett, Brown, Danahay, Havard, Honoré, Norton, Pugh, Willmott, and Woodruff voted yea.

**Senate Bill No. 97 by Senator Nevers**

Senator Nevers presented Senate Bill No. 97, which repeals provisions relative to the Tangipahoa Parish Economic Development District.

Representative Brown offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 97 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 97 was reported favorably by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Badon, Billiot, Wesley Bishop, Brossett, Brown, Danahay, Havard, Honoré, Norton, Pugh, Willmott, and Woodruff voted yea.

**Senate Bill No. 262 by Senator Nevers**

Senator Nevers presented Senate Bill No. 262, which provides for a per diem for board members of the Washington Parish Gas Utility District No. 2.

Representative Norton offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 262 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 262 was reported favorably by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Badon, Billiot, Brossett, Brown, Danahay, Havard, Honoré, Norton, Pugh, Willmott, and Woodruff voted yea.

**Senate Bill No. 624 by Senator Kostelka**

Senator Kostelka presented Senate Bill No. 624, which authorizes by population certain municipalities to levy a sales tax not to exceed one percent.

Representative Badon offered a set of amendments that changed the maximum population of municipalities to which the bill is applicable from 13,250 to 13,075. Representative Badon offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Badon, Billiot, Brossett, Brown, Danahay, Havard, Honoré, Norton, Pugh, and Willmott voted yea.

Representative Billiot offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 624 with amendments. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 624 was reported with amendments by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Badon, Billiot, Brossett, Brown, Danahay, Havard, Honoré, Norton, Pugh, and Willmott voted yea.

**Senate Bill No. 152 by Senator John Smith**

On behalf of Senator John Smith, Representative Billiot presented Senate Bill No. 152, which provides for increasing the board membership to ten on the War Memorial Civic Center Board in the town of DeRidder.

Representative Billiot offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 152 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 152 was reported favorably by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Badon, Billiot, Brossett, Brown, Danahay, Havard, Norton, Pugh, and Willmott voted yea.

**House Bill No. 1164 by Representative Jackson**

Chairman Badon announced that House Bill No. 1164, which provides relative to fiscal administrators, including provisions for their powers and duties and prohibition of retroactive application of certain provisions of law relative to fiscal administrators, had been voluntarily deferred by the author.

Dr. Maurice Millere, representing Jonesboro Homer Civil Rights Advocacy Association (no address given), 202) 735-7656, was present in support of the bill.

**Senate Bill No. 442 by Senator Martiny**

At the request of Senator Martiny, Representative Bryan Adams presented Senate Bill No. 442, which provides relative to investments by political subdivisions.

Mr. Larry Sisung, representing Sisung Group, 201 St. Charles Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70170, (504) 544-7700, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 442.

Present in support of the bill but declining to speak were Ms. Alisha M. Duhon, representing Adams and Reese LLP and United Professionals Company, 450 Laurel Street, Suite 1900, Baton Rouge, LA 70801, (225) 336-5200; Mr. Rodney Braxton, representing Sisung Group, 543 Spanish Town Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70802; and Ms. Judy McCleary, representing Sisung Group, 14978 Centenary, St. Francisville, LA 70775.

Representative Brown offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 442 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 442 was reported favorably by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Badon, Billiot, Wesley Bishop, Brossett, Brown, Danahay, Havard, Norton, Pugh, Willmott, and Woodruff voted yea.

#### **Senate Bill No. 630 by Senator Martiny**

Senator Martiny presented Senate Bill No. 630, which provides for the qualification of a newspaper to publish official proceedings, legal notices, or advertisements in Orleans Parish or Jefferson Parish.

Ms. Gina Goings, representing *The New Orleans Advocate*, 1445 Lakeridge Drive, Baton Rouge, LA, was present in support of the bill.

Mr. Kevin Cunningham, representing *The Times-Picayune*, 543 Spanish Town Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70820, and Mr. Rodney Braxton, representing NOLA Media Group, 543 Spanish Town Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 381-0166, spoke in opposition to the bill.

Representative Brown offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 630 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 630 was reported favorably by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Badon, Billiot, Brossett, Brown, Burrell, Danahay, Havard, Honoré, Norton, Pugh, and Willmott voted yea.

*Vice Chairman Billiot in the chair.*

#### **House Bill No. 1083 by Representative Badon**

Representative Badon presented House Bill No. 1083, which authorizes the governing authority of the city of New Orleans to levy an additional hotel occupancy tax.

Mayor Mitch Landrieu, representing the city of New Orleans, 1300 Perdido Street, New Orleans, LA 70112, spoke in support of the bill and presented a reprint of an article from *The New Orleans Advocate* dated April 23, 2014, entitled "Guest Commentary: Preparing for the Tough Challenges Ahead (Exhibit A).

Mr. Andy Kopplin, first deputy mayor of the city of New Orleans, 1300 Perdido Street, New Orleans, LA 70112, spoke in support of the bill and presented "City of New Orleans, 2015 Funding Challenges Overview" dated April 20, 2014 (Exhibit B), and "Reinvigorating Tourism in New Orleans, Task Force Materials" dated November 9, 200, from The Boston Consulting Group (Exhibit C).

Present in support of House Bill No. 1083 but declining to speak were Mr. Nicholas Felton, president of New Orleans Fire Fighters, 3520 General De Gaulle Drive, New Orleans, LA 70114, (504) 366-8564; Mr. David Watkins, representing New Orleans Fire Fighters, 3520 General De Gaulle Drive, New Orleans, LA 70114, (504) 366-8564; Mr. Rodney Braxton, representing the city of New Orleans, 543 Spanish Town Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 387-0166; Mr. Kevin Cunningham, representing the city of New Orleans and Southern Strategy Group, 543 Spanish Town Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 268-2730, and who presented a paper entitled "Resolution Supporting the Use of Lodging (Hotel/Motel) Tax Revenues for only Tourism Promotion and/or Tourism Development" (Exhibit D); and Mr. Louis Reine, representing AFL-CIO, 429 Government Street, Baton Rouge, LA.

Speaking in opposition to House Bill No. 1083 were Mr. Robert Bray, representing Marriott Hotels, 555 Canal Street, New Orleans, LA 70130, (504) 553-5600; Mr. Stephen Perry, representing New Orleans Tourism, 404 Notre Dame, New Orleans, LA, (504) 566-5049 and who presented a flyer entitled "Do Not Kill The New Orleans Economy, Please Vote Against House Bill 1083 (Exhibit E); Lieutenant Governor Jay Dardenne, representing office of lieutenant governor, Capitol Annex Building, 1051 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-7009; and Mr. Gregory Rusovich, representing Convention and Visitors Bureau and the business community of New Orleans, 201 St. Charles Avenue, New Orleans, LA (832) 260-5401.

*Chairman Badon in the chair.*

Present in opposition to House Bill No. 1083 but declining to speak were Ms. Donna Glover, representing New Orleans Convention & Visitors Bureau, 2020 St. Charles Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70130, (504) 566-5007; Ms. Marion Fox, representing Jefferson Davis Parish Tourist Commission, 100 Ruedel Acadie, Jennings, LA 70546, (337) 821-5521; Ms. Renée Areng, representing Visit Baton Rouge (no address given), (225) 387-3582; Mr. Arwin Bascle, representing Louisiana Hotel and Lodging, 1720 Nicholson Drive, Baton Rouge 70802; Ms. Jill Kidder, representing Louisiana Travel Promotion Association, 1165 South Foster Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, (225) 803-7033; Ms. Darienne Mobley, representing Louisiana Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus, 1165 South Foster, Baton Rouge, LA 70808; Ms. Laura Cating, representing Louisiana Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus, 1165 South Foster Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, (225) 408-4027; Mr. Bill Langkopp, representing Louisiana Hotel and Lodging Association, 201 St. Charles Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70170, (504) 525-9326; Mr. Eldon Rogillio, legislative counsel representing Louisiana Restaurant Association, 2700 North Arnoult Road, Metairie, LA 70002, (504) 454-2277; Mr. Ryan Haynie, representing Tourism Coalition, P.O. Box

Baton Rouge, LA 44037, (225) 336-4143; and Mr. Darryl Berger, representing Hotel Industry, New Orleans, 100 Conti Street, New Orleans, LA, (504) 581-4082; and Ms. Donna O'Darido, representing Louisiana Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaux and St. Tammany Tourist Commission, 68099 Highway 159, Mandeville, LA 70471, (985) 0520.

Representative Brossett offered a motion to call the question for a vote House Bill No. 1083. Without objection, the motion to call the question passed by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Badon, Barras, Barrow, Berthelot, Billiot, Wesley Bishop, Brossett, Brown, Burrell, Havard, Norton, Pugh, Willmott, and Woodruff voted yea.

Representative Brossett offered a motion to report House Bill No. 1083 with amendments (that had been previously adopted at the April 24, 2014, meeting of the House Committee on Municipal, Parochial and Cultural Affairs), to which Representative Willmott objected. The secretary called the roll and House Bill No. 1083 was reported with amendments by a vote of 7 yeas and 6 nays. Representatives Badon, Barrow, Billiot, Wesley Bishop, Brossett, Burrell, and Woodruff voted yea. Representatives Barras, Berthelot, Havard, Norton, Pugh, and Willmott voted nay.

#### **House Bill No. 1210 by Representative Moreno**

Representative Moreno presented House Bill No. 1210, which authorizes the parish of Orleans to levy a sales tax on tobacco products sold in the parish.

Representative Badon offered a set of amendments that changed the amount of the proposed tax from \$0.75 to \$0.80 and specified the distribution of the additional \$0.05. Representative Badon offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Badon, Barras, Barrow, Berthelot, Billiot, Burrell, Havard, Honoré, Norton, Pugh, and Willmott voted yea.

Speaking in support of House Bill No. 1210 was Ms. Suchitra J. Satpathi, representing the city of New Orleans, 1300 Perdido Street, New Orleans, LA 70113, (504) 658-4900.

Present in support of the bill but declining to speak were Mr. Andy Kopplin, representing the city of New Orleans, 1300 Perdido Street, New Orleans, LA 70112; Mayor Mitch Landrieu, representing the city of New Orleans, 1300 Perdido Street, New Orleans, LA 70112; Mr. David Watkins, representing New Orleans Fire Fighters, 3520 General De Gaulle Drive, New Orleans, LA, (504) 366-8564; Mr. Nicholas Felton, president, New Orleans Fire Fighters, 3520 General De Gaulle Drive, New Orleans, LA 70114, (504) 366-8564; Mr. Louis Reine, representing Louisiana AFL-CIO, 429 Government Street, Baton Rouge, LA, (225) 383-5741; Mr. Aaron Miscenich, representing New Orleans Bio Innovation Center, 1441 Canal Street, New Orleans, LA 70112, (504) 451-4496; Ms. Catherine Kitchen, representing Ochsner Health System (no address given), (504) 842-3228; Mr. Rodney Braxton, representing the city of New Orleans, 543 Spanish Town Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 387-0166; Mr. Kevin Cunningham, representing the city of New Orleans and

Southern Strategy Group, 543 Spanish Town Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 268-2730; Mr. Dino Paternostro, representing Legislink, 4620 Hessmer, Metairie, LA, (504) 256-7201; Mr. Michael Hecht, representing Greater New Orleans, Inc., 365 Canal Street, New Orleans, LA, (504) 327-6900; and Ms. Jennifer Marusak, representing Louisiana State Medical Society, 6767 Perkins Road, Suite 100, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, (225) 763-8500.

Speaking in opposition to House Bill No. 1210 were Ms. Jessica Elliott, representing Louisiana Retailers Association, P.O. Box 44034, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 344-9481; and Mr. Jack Casanova, representing Louisiana Wholesalers and Church Point Wholesale, 9684 Church Point Highway, Church Point, LA 70505, (337) 684-5411. Ms. Elliott and Mr. Casanova presented a packet containing a letter from Grover Norquist, president, Americans for Tax Reform dated April 24, 2014, and letters to the Editor dated April 23, 2014, from Mr. Dwayne Boudreax, Circle Food Store, New Orleans, LA, and Mr. Kenneth J. Retif, Retif Oil & Fuel, Harvey, LA (Exhibit F); and a letter from Council for Citizens Against Government Waste, dated April 23, 2014 (Exhibit G)

Present in opposition to the bill but declining to speak were Mr. Ryan Haynie, representing Altria, P.O. Box 44032, Baton Rouge, LA; (225) 336-1143; Mr. Fred Burkett, representing Louisiana Retailers Association, P.O. Box 44034, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 344-9481; Ms. Gina Goings, representing Swisher, 1445 Lakeridge Drive, Baton Rouge, LA, (225) 326-1244; Mr. Jim Nickel and Mr. Bud Courson, representing Cigar Association, 453 Lafayette Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70805, (225) 346-6900; Mr. Christian Rhodes, representing Reynolds American, 8440 Jefferson Highway, Baton Rouge, LA 70816; Mr. David Tatman, representing Louisiana Association of Wholesalers, 3043 Old Forge Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, (225) 931-0793; Mr. Jim Nickel and Mr. Bud Courson, representing Louisiana Oil Marketers and Convenience Store Association, 453 Lafayette Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70805, (225) 346-6900; Mr. John Borill, representing Church Point Wholesale, 1200 Camellia Boulevard, Lafayette, LA 70503; Ms. Natalie Babin Isaacks, representing Louisiana Oil Marketers and Convenience Store Association (no address given), Baton Rouge, LA, (225) 926-8300; and Mr. Larry Murray, president, The Capitol Group, P.O. Box 44153, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 381-0127.

Representative Woodruff offered a motion to report House Bill No. 1210 with amendments, to which Representative Berthelot objected. The secretary called the roll and by a vote of 6 yeas and 7 nays, the motion failed to pass. Representatives Badon, Barrow, Billiot, Brossett, Honoré, and Woodruff voted yea. Representatives Berthelot, Brown, Havard, Norton, Ortego, Pugh, and Willmott voted nay.

#### **Senate Bill No. 617 by Senator Amedee**

At the request of Senator Amedee, Representative Berthelot presented Senate Bill No. 617, which provides relative to the creation of Ascension Parish Road Infrastructure Development Districts.



Representative Berthelot offered a set of amendments that made the levy of a tax or assessment subject to voter approval unless there are no qualified voters in the district, and granted that the authority to levy a tax or assessment is in addition to powers and rights conferred by any other general or special law. Representative Berthelot offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Badon, Berthelot, Billiot, Brown, Burrell, Havard, Honoré, Norton, Ortego, Pugh, Willmott, and Woodruff voted yea.

Mr. Saun Sullivan, representing Denham Springs Land Development (no address given), (225) 769-7696, was present to provide information.

Mr. Jeff Purpera, Jr., representing Denham Springs Land Development Homes, LLC, 1244 South Range Avenue, Denham Springs, LA 70726, (225) 369-6109, spoke in opposition to the bill.

Representative Berthelot offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 617 with amendments. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 617 was reported with amendments by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Badon, Berthelot, Billiot, Brown, Burrell, Havard, Honoré, Ortego, Pugh, Willmott, and Woodruff voted yea.

**IV. OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

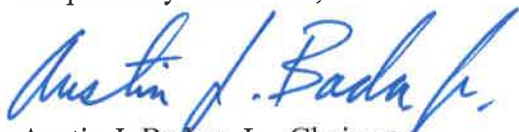
**V. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no other announcements.

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Austin J. Badon, Jr., Chairman  
House Committee on Municipal, Parochial and Cultural Affairs  
Adopted April 22, 2015