

House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment

Minutes of Meeting
2020 Regular Session
May 19, 2020

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Jean-Paul P. Coussan, chairman of the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment, called the meeting to order at 8:59 a.m. in Room 4, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Jean-Paul P. Coussan, chairman
Representative Ryan Joseph Bourriaque, vice chairman
Representative Rhonda Gaye Butler
Representative R. Dewith Carrier
Representative Phillip R. DeVillier
Representative Daryl Andrew Deshotel
Representative Timothy P. Kerner
Representative Mandie Landry
Representative Rodney Lyons
Representative Buddy Mincey, Jr.
Representative Neil Riser
Representative Troy D. Romero
Representative William "Bill" Wheat, Jr.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Su King, legislative analyst
Tyler Bosworth, legislative analyst
Trinicia Bryant, committee administrative assistant

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Angela McKnight, sergeant at arms

III. DISCUSSION OF LEGISLATION

Senate Bill No. 386 by Senator Allain

Senator Allain presented Senate Bill No. 386, which establishes the Commission for Louisiana's Energy, Environment, and Restoration.

Representative Coussan offered amendments to add the word "Advisory" to the title of the commission. Representative Coussan offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Bourriaque, Butler, Carrier, DeVillier, Deshotel, Kerner, Landry, Mincey, Riser, Romero, and Wheat voted yea.

Representative Bourriaque offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 386 with amendments. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 386 was reported with amendments by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Bourriaque, Butler, Carrier, DeVillier, Deshotel, Kerner, Landry, Mincey, Riser, Romero, and Wheat voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 2 in support, 0 in opposition, 0 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Statements submitted in accordance with House Rule 14.33 in lieu of appearing before the committee are as follows: 0 in support, 1 in opposition, and 0 for information only. Copies of these statements are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 447 by Senator Allain

Senator Allain presented Senate Bill No. 447, which provides relative to plugging of orphaned wells and certain agreements by the commissioner of conservation.

Representative Coussan offered amendments to:

1. Remove the requirement for a cash bond, performance bond, or other surety in order to bid on a contract for site assessment or restoration.
2. Exempt from the requirement of licensing by the state licensing board for contractors a person bidding or performing on a project paid for by monies from the Oilfield Site Restoration Fund or the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.
3. Make technical changes.

Representative Coussan offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Bourriaque, Butler, Carrier, DeVillier, Deshotel, Kerner, Landry, Mincey, Riser, Romero, and Wheat voted yea.

Representative Bourriaque offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 447 with amendments. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 447 was reported with amendments by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Bourriaque, Butler, Carrier, DeVillier, Deshotel, Kerner, Landry, Mincey, Riser, Romero, and Wheat voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 0 in support, 0 in opposition, 1 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Statements submitted in accordance with House Rule 14.33 in lieu of appearing before the committee are as follows: 0 in support, 1 in opposition, and 0 for information only. Copies of these statements are included in the committee records.

House Concurrent Resolution No. 62 by Representative Hodges

Representative Hodges presented House Concurrent Resolution No. 62, which continues the Comite River Diversion Canal Project Task Force.

Representative Coussan offered amendments to add a representative of the board of commissioners for the Amite River Basin Drainage and Water Conservation District appointed by the president of the board to the membership of the task force.

Representative Coussan offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Bourriaque, Butler, Carrier, Deshotel, Kerner, Landry, Mincey, Riser, Romero, and Wheat voted yea.

Representative Mincey offered a motion to report House Concurrent Resolution No. 62 with amendments. Without objection, House Concurrent Resolution No. 62 was reported with amendments by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Bourriaque, Butler, Carrier, Deshotel, Kerner, Landry, Mincey, Riser, Romero, and Wheat voted yea.

House Concurrent Resolution No. 64 by Representative Zeringue

Representative Zeringue presented House Concurrent Resolution No. 64, which expresses support for the annual Gulf Hypoxia Mapping Cruise conducted by the Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium and memorializes congress to provide continued funding.

Representative Mincey offered a motion to report House Concurrent Resolution No. 64 favorably. Without objection, House Concurrent Resolution No. 64 was reported favorably by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Bourriaque, Butler, Carrier, Deshotel, Kerner, Landry, Mincey, Riser, Romero, and Wheat voted yea.

House Concurrent Resolution No. 61 by Representative Riser

Representative Riser presented House Concurrent Resolution No. 61, which urges and requests the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to review the restrictions on possession of exotic and invasive species.

Representative Mincey offered a motion to report House Concurrent Resolution No. 61 favorably. Without objection, House Concurrent Resolution No. 61 was reported favorably by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Bourriaque, Butler, Carrier, Deshotel, Kerner, Landry, Lyons, Mincey, Riser, Romero, and Wheat voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 0 in support, 0 in opposition, 1 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 117 by Senator Hensgens

On behalf of Senator Hensgens, Representative Coussan presented Senate Bill No. 117, which re-creates the Department of Natural Resources.

Thomas Harris, secretary, Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, no card provided, spoke for information only on Senate Bill No. 117. He provided the committee with a copy of the departments strategic plan, Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records.

Mark Brady, undersecretary, Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, no card provided, spoke for information only on Senate Bill No. 117. He provided the committee with a copy of the departments 2019 Internal Audit Report, Exhibit B, which is included in the committee records.

Representative Coussan offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 117 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 117 was reported favorably by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Bourriaque, Butler, Carrier, Deshotel, Kerner, Landry, Lyons, and Wheat voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 1 in support, 0 in opposition, 0 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Concurrent Resolution No. 90 by Representative Coussan

Representative Coussan presented House Concurrent Resolution No. 90, which suspends from March 11, 2020, until September 30, 2020, the provisions of law applicable to mineral leases maintained in production in paying quantities.

Representative Coussan offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Concurrent Resolution No. 90. Without objection, action on House Concurrent Resolution No. 90 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Bourriaque, Butler, Carrier, DeVillier, Deshotel, Kerner, Landry, Lyons, and Wheat voted yea.

Statements submitted in accordance with House Rule 14.33 in lieu of appearing before the committee are as follows: 0 in support, 1 in opposition, and 0 for information only. Copies of these statements are included in the committee records.

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 56 by Senator Hewitt

Senator Hewitt presented Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 56, which requests CPRA and the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to cooperate in developing projects and programs to enhance the oyster industry.

Representative DeVillier offered a motion to report Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 56 favorably. Without objection, Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 56 was reported favorably by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Bourriaque, Butler, Carrier, DeVillier, Deshotel, Kerner, Landry, Lyons, and Wheat voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 0 in support, 0 in opposition, 1 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 353 by Senator Hewitt

Senator Hewitt presented Senate Bill No. 353, which provides for carbon sequestration.

Representative Coussan offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on Senate Bill No. 353. Without objection, action on Senate Bill No. 353 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Bourriaque, Butler, Carrier, DeVillier, Deshotel, Kerner, Landry, Lyons, and Wheat voted yea.

Statements submitted in accordance with House Rule 14.33 in lieu of appearing before the committee are as follows: 0 in support, 1 in opposition, and 0 for information only. Copies of these statements are included in the committee records

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Representative DeVillier offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Bourriaque, Butler, Carrier, DeVillier, Deshotel, Kerner, Landry, Lyons, and Wheat voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Chairman Jean-Paul P. Coussan
House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment

Date adopted: April 22, 2021