

House Committee on Education

Minutes of Meeting
2023 Regular Session
May 23, 2023

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Lance Harris, chairman of the House Committee on Education, called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. in Room 1, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Lance Harris, chairman
Representative Beryl A. Amedée
Representative Kendrick "Ken" Brass
Representative Julie Emerson
Representative Barbara Reich Freiberg
Representative Brett F. Geymann
Representative Patrick O. Jefferson, vice chairman
Representative Charles Anthony Owen
Representative Tammy T. Phelps
Representative Vincent "Vinney" J. St. Blanc, III
Representative Phillip Eric Tarver

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative Aimee Adatto Freeman

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Elizabeth L. Borne, legislative analyst
Lisa Lovello, legislative analyst
Alexandra Cravins, committee administrative assistant
Sarah Baker, committee assistant

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Myrtis Jarrell, sergeant at arms
Frank Meyer, IV, clerk

III. BUSINESS

Chairman Harris announced that the committee would observe a three-minute rule for presenters and speakers on ensuing instruments.

House Resolution No. 8 by Representative Boyd

Representative Boyd presented House Resolution No. 8, which creates a special study committee to study the need for and obstacles to the installation of sidewalks at Edna Karr High School in New Orleans.

Representative Brass offered a motion to report House Resolution No. 8 favorably. Without objection, House Resolution No. 8 was reported favorably by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Harris, Amedée, Brass, Emerson, Freiberg, Geymann, Jefferson, Charles Owen, Phelps, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 1 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 7 by Senator Cloud

Senator Cloud presented Senate Bill No. 7, which provides relative to access to certain materials in public libraries. Senator Cloud provided handouts, "Myth vs. Fact", Exhibit A, and "Protecting Innocence", Exhibit B, which are included in the committee records.

Attorney General Jeff Landry, 1885 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 326-6079, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 7.

Emily Andrews, Office of Louisiana Attorney General, 1885 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 326-6000, spoke for information only on Senate Bill No. 7.

Gene Mills, Louisiana Family Forum, 655 Saint Ferdinand Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 344-8533, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 7.

Sancha Smith, 904 Tensas Drive, Opelousas, LA, (337) 308-8696, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 7.

John Raymond, Saint Tammany Republican Parish Executive Committee, 62187 Graci Avenue, Lacombe, LA 70458, (985) 768-9640, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 7.

Representative Pat Moore, 300 Washington Street, Monroe, LA, (318) 362-3014, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 7.

Dr. Will Hall, Louisiana Baptist Office of Public Policy, 1250 MacArthur Drive, Alexandria, LA 71303, (318) 449-4343, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 7.

Melissa Flournoy, 10,000 Women, 650 North Sixth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 936-7200, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 7.

Peyton Rose Michelle, Louisiana Trans Advocates, 1099 Ruth Drive, St. Martinville, LA 70582, (337) 356-9312, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 7.

Kathy Wascom, East Baton Rouge Parish Library Board, 1255 Aberdeen, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, (225) 344-4313, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 7.

Amanda Jones, Louisiana Association of School Librarians, 34390 LA Highway 1019, Denham Springs, LA 70706, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 7 and provided a handout, "The Myths and Facts About Louisiana Public Libraries", Exhibit C, which is included in the committee records.

Sarah Jane Guidry, Forum for Equality, 4915 South Claiborne Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70125, (504) 301-6006, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 7.

Kimberlee Reynolds, 4936 Zenith Street, Metairie, LA 70001, (828) 719-1355, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 7.

Mary Stein, 12903 Goodwood Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70815, (225) 939-3623, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 7.

Lisa Rustemeyer, 104 West Ninth Avenue, Covington, LA 70433, (985) 234-9970, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 7.

Jamie Segura, 16309 East Brewster Road, Covington, LA 70433, (985) 264-3070, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 7.

Sonnet Ireland, 104 Drury Lane, Slidell, LA 70460, (504) 390-6834, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 7.

Joan Simon, 154 Belle Terre Boulevard, Covington, LA 70433, (985) 807-7329, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 7.

Representative Amedée offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 7 favorably, to which Representative Jefferson objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and Senate Bill No. 7 was reported favorably by a vote of 8 yeas and 3 nays. Representatives Harris, Amedée, Emerson, Freiberg, Geymann, Charles Owen, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted yea. Representatives Brass, Jefferson, and Phelps voted nay.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 6 in support, and 17 in opposition. 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: 4 in support, 21 in opposition, and 1 for information only. Copies of these statements are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 163 by Senator Hewitt

Senator Hewitt presented Senate Bill No. 163, which requires numeracy professional development for certain teachers.

Ethan Melancon, Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 163.

Jenna Chaisson, Louisiana Department of Education, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (877) 453-2721, spoke for information only on Senate Bill No. 163.

Representative Tarver offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 163 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 163 was reported favorably by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Harris, Amedée, Brass, Freiberg, Geymann, Jefferson, Charles Owen, Phelps, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 4 in support, and for 1 information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 204 by Senator Hewitt

Senator Hewitt presented Senate Bill No. 204, which provides relative to the M.J. Foster Promise Award program.

Monty Sullivan, Louisiana Community and Technical College System, 265 South Foster Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70786, spoke for information only on Senate Bill No. 204.

Ethan Melancon, Louisiana Department of Education, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on Senate Bill No. 204.

Representative Brass offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 204 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 204 was reported favorably by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Harris, Brass, Freiberg, Geymann, Jefferson, Charles Owen, Phelps, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 8 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 207 by Senator Milligan

Senator Milligan presented Senate Bill No. 207, which creates the School Safety Act of 2023.

Isabella Lancaster, Louisiana Youth Advisory Council, 628 Smith Drive, Metairie, LA 70005, (504) 818-9270, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 207.

Diana Diaz, 13455 Ellis Street, Vacherie, LA 70090, (225) 265-6034, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 207.

Holly Phan, Louisiana Youth Advisory Council, 17797 East Purple Martin Court, no city or state provided, (225) 454-3527, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 207.

Representative Brass offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 207 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 207 was reported favorably by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Harris, Amedée, Brass, Emerson, Freiberg, Jefferson, Charles Owen, Phelps, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 8 in support. 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: 1 in support. Copies of these statements are included in the committee records.

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 37 by Senator McMath

Senator McMath presented Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 37, which requests the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Board of Regents to publish certain information annually relative to college and career readiness outcomes.

Representative Amedée offered a motion to report Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 37 favorably. Without objection, Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 37 was reported favorably by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Harris, Amedée, Brass, Emerson, Freiberg, Geymann, Jefferson, Charles Owen, Phelps, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 2 in support, and 1 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 177 by Senator McMath

Senator McMath presented Senate Bill No. 177, which provides relative to required accelerated instruction for certain students.

Kelli Bottger, Louisiana Kids Matter, 37397 Cypress Alley Avenue, Gonzales, LA 70737, (225) 936-9800, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 177.

Michael Faulk, Louisiana Association of School Superintendents, 2713 Indian Mound Boulevard, Monroe, LA 71201, (225) 229-6021, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 177.

Ethan Melancon, Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on Senate Bill No. 177.

Representative Harris offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 177 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 177 was reported favorably by a vote of 8 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Harris, Brass, Emerson, Freiberg, Geymann, Charles Owen, Phelps, and Tarver voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 6 in support, and 5 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 46 by Senator Abraham

Senator Abraham presented Senate Bill No. 46, which provides for review of textbooks and other instructional materials.

Representative Geymann offered amendments that:

1. Removed the proposed law requirement that if a nationally recognized High Quality Instructional Materials organization determines that textbooks or instructional materials are of high quality, the Louisiana Department of Education shall recognize that determination for all purposes, including funding eligibility.
2. Added a requirement that the Louisiana Department of Education respond to a request for review of textbooks or other instructional materials with a report quantifying the extent to which the materials align with state content standards within six months.

Representative Geymann offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Harris, Amedée, Brass, Emerson, Freiberg, Geymann, Charles Owen, Phelps, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted yea.

Dr. Cade Brumley, Louisiana Department of Education, no address provided, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 46.

Ethan Melancon, Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, withdrew his opposition to House Bill No. 46.

Representative Harris offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 46 with amendments. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 46 was reported with amendments by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Harris, Amedée, Brass, Emerson, Freiberg, Geymann, Charles Owen, Phelps, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 11 in support, and 4 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Geymann offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Harris, Amedée, Brass, Emerson, Freiberg, Geymann, Charles Owen, Phelps, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Lance Harris
House Committee on Education

Date adopted: