

House Committee on House and Governmental Affairs

Minutes of Meeting
2023 Regular Session
May 23, 2023

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative John M. Stefanski, chairman of the House Committee on House and Governmental Affairs, called the meeting to order at 9:16 a.m. in Room 3, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative John M. Stefanski, chairman
Representative Gerald "Beau" Beaulieu, IV
Representative Daryl Andrew Deshotel
Representative Les Farnum
Representative Foy Bryan Gadberry
Representative Barry Ivey
Representative Sam L. Jenkins, Jr.
Representative Rodney Lyons, vice chairman
Representative Tanner D. Magee
Representative Richard James Nelson
Representative Candace N. Newell
Representative Polly Thomas
Representative Malinda B. White

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative Wilford Dan Carter, Sr.
Representative Michael T. Johnson
Representative Jeremy S. LaCombe

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Patricia Lowrey-Dufour, legislative analyst
Annie Smith, attorney
Rosalie Ammersbach, committee administrative assistant

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Alex Stefanski, clerk
Vivian Hurst, sergeant at arms

III. DISCUSSION OF LEGISLATION**Senate Bill No. 213 by Senator Duplessis**

Senator Duplessis presented Senate Bill No. 213, which provides relative to the costs for public records.

Representative Thomas offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 213 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 213 was reported favorably by a vote of 8 yeas, 0 nays, and 1 abstention. Representatives Farnum, Ivey, Jenkins, Lyons, Nelson, Newell, Thomas, and White voted yea. Representative Stefanski abstained.

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. 201 by Senator Hewitt

Senator Hewitt presented Senate Bill No. 201, which provides for meetings of boards and commissions via electronic means.

Senator Hewitt provided a handout, Exhibit A, "Eligible Boards and Commissions", which is in the committee records.

Representative Stefanski offered amendments that:

- (1) Removed a general provision requiring all statewide bodies and advisory councils to adopt provisions to allow the public to participate in meetings via electronic means.
- (2) Limited the requirement for public bodies to provide the ability for persons with an ADA disability to participate in meetings via electronic means to those public bodies with the capability to do so, added the ability of caregivers of such persons to so participate, and required public bodies without the capability to do so to develop viable alternatives for such participation.

- (3) Relative to provisions for certain public bodies to meet via electronic means, removed definitions for advisory councils and statewide body and provided instead that provisions apply to any public body which has powers, duties, or functions that are not limited to a particular political subdivision or region, added to the list of public bodies to which proposed law does not apply, and prohibited the use of meeting via electronic means for disciplinary hearings or adjudications.
- (4) Removed the limit on the number of meetings and successive meetings via electronic means for certain public bodies and instead provided generally that no public body shall conduct all of its meetings during a calendar year via electronic means and shall limit the number of successive meetings via electronic means to a reasonable number, except that advisory public bodies and public bodies focused on dealing with disabilities or assisting military families may conduct successive meetings without limitation.
- (5) Changed the voting provisions from a requirement for a roll call to requiring that the voting decision of each participating member on each matter be clearly identified and saved in the archive.
- (6) Relative to the requirement that a public body allow a member of the public body with an ADA disability to participate in a meeting via electronic means, removed the exemption for meetings which are sequestered.
- (7) Required the legislative auditor to review the policies and practices of public bodies relative to proposed law rather than only the provisions relative to specified public bodies meeting via electronic means.
- (8) Prohibited members of public bodies participating via electronic means from receiving per diem.

Representative Stefanski offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 9 yeas, 0 nays, and 1 abstention. Representatives Beaulieu, Farnum, Gadberry, Ivey, Lyons, Nelson, Newell, Thomas, and White voted yea. Representative Stefanski abstained.

Vice Chairman Lyons in the chair.

Steven Procopio, Public Affairs Research Council, 450 Laurel Street, Suite 1650, Baton Rouge, LA 70801, (225) 276-0426, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 201.

Sadie Becnel, Louisiana Policy Institute for Children, P.O. Box 13552, New Orleans, LA 70185, (225) 382-7580, spoke for information only on Senate Bill No. 201.

Kellie Taylor-White, Louisiana Workforce Commission, 1001 North 23rd Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-3141, spoke for information only on Senate Bill No. 201.

Representative Newell offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 201 with amendments. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 201 was reported with amendments by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Beaulieu, Farnum, Gadberry, Ivey, Jenkins, Lyons, Nelson, Newell, Thomas, and White voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 1 in support, and 2 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: 4 in support. Copies of these statements are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 80 by Senator Fields

Senator Fields presented Senate Bill No. 80, which provides for transparency and community engagement in redistricting.

Representative Thomas offered amendments that:

- (1) Removed a requirement that public hearings be conducted by the joint governmental affairs committee and related provisions and removed specific presentation requirements at the hearing.
- (2) Provided instead that the legislature shall conduct the hearings and that the hearings begin after the release of redistricting data from the U.S. Census Bureau.
- (3) Provided that the hearings shall be broadcast live via the internet rather than streamed in real time and included provisions dealing with any technical difficulty occurring with the broadcast of a hearing.
- (4) Changed provisions regarding the redistricting website to instead require specified minimum content standards rather than a specific list of required content.

Representative Thomas offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Beaulieu, Farnum, Gadberry, Ivey, Jenkins, Lyons, Magee, Newell, Thomas, and White voted yea.

Representative Newell offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 80 with amendments. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 80 was reported with amendments by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Deshotel, Farnum, Gadberry, Ivey, Jenkins, Lyons, Magee, Newell, Thomas, and White voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 13 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: 2 in support. Copies of these statements are included in the committee records.

House Concurrent Resolution No. 50 by Representative Magee

Representative Magee presented House Concurrent Resolution No. 50, which provides relative to an America 250 state commission.

Representative Thomas offered a motion to report House Concurrent Resolution No. 50 favorably. Without objection, House Concurrent Resolution No. 50 was reported favorably by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Beaulieu, Deshotel, Farnum, Gadberry, Ivey, Jenkins, Lyons, Magee, Newell, Thomas, and White voted yea.

House Concurrent Resolution No. 56 by Representative Freeman

Representative Freeman presented House Concurrent Resolution No. 56, which forms a special committee to study and make recommendations concerning taxation of short-term rentals and other types of commercial housing enterprises operating in New Orleans.

Representative Newell offered a motion to report House Concurrent Resolution No. 56 favorably. Without objection, House Concurrent Resolution No. 56 was reported favorably by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Beaulieu, Deshotel, Farnum, Gadberry, Ivey, Jenkins, Lyons, Magee, Newell, Thomas, and White 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.

House Bill No. 538 by Representative Jenkins

Representative Jenkins presented House Bill No. 538, which provides relative to early voting locations.

Carlos Pollard, Jr., Power Coalition for Equity and Justice, 4930 Washington Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70125, (504) 906-4019, spoke in support of House Bill No. 538.

Kyle Ardoin, secretary of state, P.O. Box 94125, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 922-2880, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 538.

Sherri W. Hadskey, office of Louisiana secretary of state, P.O. Box 94125, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 922-2880, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 538.

Representative Ivey offered a motion to report House Bill No. 538 with amendments that were adopted by the committee at its May 17, 2023, meeting, to which Representative Beaulieu objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and the motion failed to pass by a vote of 5 yeas and 5 nays. Representatives Ivey, Jenkins, Lyons, Newell, and White voted yea. Representatives Beaulieu, Deshotel, Farnum, Gadberry, and Thomas voted nay.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 14 in support, and 2 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: 3 in support. Copies of these statements are included in the committee records.

Representative Beaulieu in the chair.

Senate Bill No. 123 by Senator Henry

Senator Henry presented Senate Bill No. 123, which provides relative to recall petitions.

Representative Beaulieu offered amendments that:

- (1) Added a specific statement that each person offering assistance to the registrar of voters shall be considered a deputy registrar for that purpose.
- (2) Provided that a request to strike a signature is public record.
- (3) Restored a present law provision regarding the duration of the chairman or vice chairman serving as custodian of the recall petition.

Representative Beaulieu offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Beaulieu, Deshotel, Farnum, Gadberry, Jenkins, Lyons, Newell, Thomas, and White voted yea.

Chairman Stefanski in the chair.

Representative Thomas offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 123 with amendments. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 123 was reported with amendments by a vote of 8 yeas, 0 nays, and 1 abstention. Representatives Beaulieu, Deshotel, Gadberry, Jenkins, Lyons, Newell, Thomas, and White voted yea. Representative Stefanski abstained.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 7 in support, and 3 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: 2 in support. Copies of these statements are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 16 by Senator Bernard

On behalf of Senator Bernard, Sherri W. Hadskey, office of Louisiana secretary of state, P.O. Box 94125, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 922-2880, presented Senate Bill No. 16, which provides relative to parish boards of election supervisors.

Further action was taken by the committee on Senate Bill No. 16 at a later point in the meeting. Please check subsequent action to complete the record of discussion and motions on Senate Bill No. 16.

Senate Bill No. 23 by Senator Bernard

On behalf of Senator Bernard, Sherri W. Hadskey, office of Louisiana secretary of state, P.O. Box 94125, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 922-2880, presented Senate Bill No. 23, which requires approval by the secretary of state for the use and expands permissible locations of alternative locations for early voting.

Representative Stefanski offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 23 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 23 was reported favorably by a vote of 8 yeas, 0 nays, and 1 abstention. Representatives Beaulieu, Deshotel, Farnum, Gadberry, Ivey, Jenkins, Lyons, and White voted yea. Representative Stefanski abstained.

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. 16 by Senator Bernard

This is a continuation of the discussion on Senate Bill No. 16 from earlier in the meeting. Please check prior action to complete the record of discussion and motions on Senate Bill No. 16.

Representative Stefanski offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 16 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 16 was reported favorably by a vote of 8 yeas, 0 nays, and 1 abstention. Representatives Beaulieu, Deshotel, Farnum, Gadberry, Ivey, Jenkins, Lyons, and White voted yea. Representative Stefanski abstained.

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

House Resolution No. 147 by Representative Beaulieu

Representative Beaulieu presented House Resolution No. 147, which provides relative to the use of the House Chamber.

Representative Deshotel offered a motion to report House Resolution No. 147 favorably. Without objection, House Resolution No. 147 was reported favorably by a vote of 9 yeas, 0 nays, and 1 abstention. Representatives Beaulieu, Deshotel, Farnum, Gadberry, Ivey, Jenkins, Lyons, Newell, and White voted yea. Representative Stefanski abstained.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Gadberry offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 9 yeas, 0 nays, and 1 abstention. Representatives Beaulieu, Deshotel, Farnum, Gadberry, Ivey, Jenkins, Lyons, Newell, and White voted yea. Representative Stefanski abstained.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:34 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman John M. Stefanski
House Committee on House and Governmental Affairs

Date adopted: