

**Judicial Structure Task Force**  
**(HR 30 2022 R.S.)**  
Minutes of Meeting  
2023-2024 Interim  
December 14, 2023

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Representative Jerome Zeringue, chairman of the Judicial Structure Task Force, called the meeting to order at 1:37 p.m. in Room 5, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

**II. ROLL CALL**

**LEGISLATIVE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Representative Jerome "Zee" Zeringue  
Senator James "Jimmy" Harris  
Representative Nicholas Muscarello, Jr.  
Representative Thomas A. Pressly, IV  
Representative Debbie Villio

**LEGISLATIVE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Representative Jason Hughes  
Representative Mandie Landry  
Representative Tanner D. Magee

**NON-LEGISLATIVE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Judge Marilyn Castle  
Judge Lee Faulkner  
Judge Douglas J. Saloom  
Judge Mitchell R. Theriot  
Chief Justice John Weimer

**NON-LEGISLATIVE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

None

**INVITED STAKEHOLDERS PRESENT:**

None

**INVITED STAKEHOLDERS ABSENT:**

Judge Chase  
Judge Holdridge

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Amanda Trapp, legislative analyst  
Jennifer Watson, committee administrative assistant

**ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:**

Stephanie Weinman, committee administrative assistant  
Michael McCain, clerk  
Faye Talbot, sergeant at arms  
Edna Buchanan, sergeant at arms

### III. DISCUSSION

#### **Adoption of minutes from June 22, 2023, and August 3, 2023, meetings of the Judicial Structure Task Force**

The minutes from meetings of the Judicial Structure Task Force dated June 22, 2023, and August 2, 2023, were presented to the committee for approval. Representative Villio offered a motion to approve the minutes. Without objection, the minutes were approved by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representative Zeringue, Judge Castle, Judge Faulkner, Senator Harris, Representative Muscarello, Representative Pressly, Judge Saloom, Judge Theriot, Representative Villio, and Chief Justice Weimer voted yea.

#### **Update on the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) workload assessments for appellate and district court judges and support staff**

Representative Zeringue summarized the chronology of the work the task force completed and expressed his disappointment that the goal of the study was not met.

Judge Weimer read from a prepared statement expressing the need to best deploy judicial resources in light of shifting populations.

Representative Pressly commented that access to justice is vital, especially in the technological field.

Judge Faulkner commented that he did not believe all was lost and that if the survey resumed early in 2024, then the study could move forward.

Representative Zeringue credited the NCSC for addressing the questions and concerns of the judges.

Judge Castle said that the impression she got from the judges as to the reason the study was not completed was mistrust of the legislature.

Representative Zeringue stated that the contract would be terminated. There was no action taken.

#### **Review and approval of the final Judicial Structure Task Force report**

The final Judicial Structure Task Force report, Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records, was presented to the committee for approval. Chief Justice Weimer offered a motion to approve the report. Without objection, the report was approved by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representative Zeringue, Judge Castle, Judge Faulkner, Senator Harris, Representative Muscarello, Representative Pressly, Judge Saloom, Judge Theriot, Representative Villio, and Chief Justice Weimer voted yea.

**IV. OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

**V. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

Chief Justice Weimer offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion was adopted by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representative Zeringue, Judge Castle, Judge Faulkner, Representative Muscarello, Representative Pressly, Judge Saloom, Judge Theriot, Representative Villio, and Chief Justice Weimer voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Chairman Jerome "Zee" Zeringue  
Judicial Structure Task Force

Date adopted: