

**Judicial Structure Task Force**  
**(HR 30 2022 R.S.)**  
Minutes of Meeting  
March 16, 2023

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Representative Jerome Zeringue, chairman of the Judicial Structure Task Force, called the meeting to order at 11:06 a.m. in Room 2, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

**II. ROLL CALL**

**LEGISLATIVE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

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

**NON-LEGISLATIVE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

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

**INVITED STAKEHOLDERS PRESENT:**

Judge Tiffany Chase  
Judge Guy Holdridge

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Amanda Trapp, legislative analyst  
Stephanie Weinman, committee administrative assistant

**ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:**

Michael McCain, clerk  
Myrtis Jarrell, sergeant at arms

### III. DISCUSSION

Kerry Lentini, Louisiana Supreme Court, 300 Southern Rd., River Ridge, LA 70123, (504) 400-4499, provided an overview of the Appellate Court Advisory Committee meeting that was held on February 28, 2023.

Chief Justice Weimer offered a motion to adopt the minutes from the task force meeting held on February 1, 2023. Without objection, the motion was adopted by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representative Zeringue, Judge Castle, Judge Faulkner, Senator Harris, Representative Hughes, Representative Muscarello, Representative Pressly, Judge Saloom, Judge Theriot, Representative Villio, and Chief Justice Weimer voted yea.

Representative Zeringue opened discussion on the four items for recommendation:

- (1) Establish a standard, uniform data-collection method in order to collect reliable, accurate, and comparable case data statewide.
- (2) Promote minimum uniform technology standards for the courts and clerks of court, with an emphasis on assisting underfunded and underserved jurisdictions with their technological needs.
- (3) Establish a comprehensive review of judgeships statewide on a recurring basis to ensure future flexibility in responding to judgeship needs.
- (4) Provide for statewide e-filing at all court levels.

Amanda Trapp, legislative analyst, provided information about the Court Modernization and Technology Grant Program draft, Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records.

Jennifer Eagan, Louisiana Supreme Court, 400 Royal St., New Orleans, LA 70130, (504) 310-2616, introduced herself to the committee.

Chief Justice Weimer requested that the word "grant" be removed from the "Court Modernization and Technology Grant Program". Judge Theriot and Chief Justice Weimer discussed the proposed legislation and creating a fund for the Court Modernization and Technology Grant Program. Judge Holdridge and Chief Justice Weimer agree to amend the title of the program "Court Modernization and Technology Program".

Chief Justice Weimer offered a motion to adopt the Court Modernization and Technology Program draft. Without objection, the motion was adopted by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representative Zeringue, Judge Castle, Judge Faulkner, Senator Harris, Representative Hughes, Representative Muscarello, Representative Pressly, Judge Saloom, Judge Theriot, Representative Villio, and Chief Justice Weimer voted yea.

Amanda Trapp explained the next proposed legislation to the task force, which would provide relative to the Judicial Council of the Supreme Court. The proposed draft, Exhibit B, is included in the committee records.

Judge Holdridge, Representative Pressly, Representative Villio, and Chief Justice Weimer discussed adding a provision that allows for judgeships to be suspended instead of eliminated and ensured that the legislature would have the same authority that exists in current law.

Sandra Vujnovich, Judicial Administrator's Office, Louisiana Supreme Court, 400 Royal St., New Orleans, LA 70130, (504) 310-2605, and Judge Chase discussed the performance review and evaluation process in the court system.

Judge Theriot offered a motion to defer discussion on the proposed draft until the next meeting of the Judicial Structure Task Force. After discussion, Judge Theriot withdrew the motion.

Amanda Trapp explained the next proposed legislation to the task force, which would provide relative to electronic case filings. The proposed draft, Exhibit C, is included in the committee records.

Annette Fontana, Clerks of Court Association, 10202 Jefferson Hwy., Bldg. A., Baton Rouge, LA 70809, (225) 293-1162, spoke for information only. Annette Fontana discussed her position serving as the vice chairman of the Task Force on Statewide Standards for Clerks of Court Electronic Filing and Record Retention and her experience as the clerk of court of Lafouche Parish.

Annette Fontana answered questions from several members regarding the Louisiana Clerks' Remote Access Authority and statewide e-filing proposals.

## **V. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chairman Zeringue announced that the next meeting of the task force would be held on April 20, 2023, at 11:00 a.m.

## **VI. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Chairman Jerome "Zee" Zeringue  
Judicial Structure Task Force

Date adopted: 4-21-23