

Judicial Structure Task Force
(HR 30 2022 R.S.)
Minutes of Meeting
June 22, 2023

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Jerome Zeringue, chairman of the Judicial Structure Task Force, called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. in Room 1, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

LEGISLATIVE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Jerome "Zee" Zeringue
Representative Jason M. Hughes
Representative Mandie Landry
Representative Nicholas Muscarello, Jr.
Representative Debbie Villio

LEGISLATIVE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Senator James "Jimmy" Harris
Representative Tanner D. Magee
Representative Thomas A. Pressly, IV

NON-LEGISLATIVE MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

NON-LEGISLATIVE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Judge Mitchell R. Theriot

INVITED STAKEHOLDERS PRESENT:

Judge Tiffany Chase

INVITED STAKEHOLDERS ABSENT:

Judge Guy Holdridge

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Amanda Trapp, legislative analyst
Diane Merritt, committee administrative assistant

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Michael McCain, clerk
Faye Talbot, sergeant at arms
Danny Leming, sergeant at arms

III. DISCUSSION

Representative Zeringue provided an update on relevant legislation from the 2023 Regular Session. He explained an error in the conference committee report relative to the Court Modernization and Technology Fund.

Brian Wiggins, Louisiana Supreme Court, 400 Royal St., New Orleans, LA 70130, (504) 202-0157, testified for information only and provided information on the next steps for setting up criteria for the fund.

Representative Muscarello explained that House Bill No. 661 was adopted as a substitute bill for House Bill No. 300. He stated that the substitute bill removed the annual review process and instead amended current law to authorize the judicial council to make recommendations for the elimination of judgeships.

Representative Zeringue explained that House Resolution No. 204 by Representative Magee requests the Louisiana Clerks' Remote Access Authority (LCRAA) to provide information on the current status of e-filing capabilities for parish clerks of court across the state. He said that this would help the legislature and stakeholders to get a better idea of where we are and the funding and other changes necessary to move forward on integrated e-filing.

Annette Fontana, Clerks of Court Association, 10202 Jefferson Hwy., Bldg. A., Baton Rouge, LA 70809, (225) 293-1162, testified 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 Representative Villio regarding the Louisiana Clerks' Remote Access Authority and statewide e-filing.

Kerry Lentini, Louisiana Supreme Court, 300 Southern Rd., River Ridge, LA 70123, (504) 400-4499, provided an update on the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) workload assessments for appellate and district court judges and support staff.

Representative Zeringue pointed out to the task force that a list of the District Court Advisory Committee members was in their folders.

Kerry Lentini answered questions from several members regarding the NCSC training prior to starting the study.

Sandra Vujnovich, Judicial Administrator's Office, Louisiana Supreme Court, 400 Royal St., New Orleans, LA 70130, (504) 310-2605, provided an update on the Judicial College Summer School session on the workload assessments. She addressed questions from the members of the task force relative to time study and data reporting standards.

A statement relative to legislation from the 2023 Regular Session was submitted in lieu of appearing before the committee from Chief Judge Donald R. Johnson, 19th Judicial District Court, dated June 21, 2023. A copy of the statement is included in the committee records.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

The minutes from the Judicial Structure Task Force dated April 21, 2023, were presented to the committee for approval. Chief Justice Weimer offered a motion to approve the minutes. Without objection, the minutes were approved by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representative Zeringue, Judge Castle, Judge Faulkner, Representatives Hughes, Representative Landry, Representative Muscarello, Judge Saloom, Representative Villio, and Chief Justice Weimer voted yea.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Jerome "Zee" Zeringue
Judicial Structure Task Force

Date adopted: