

House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment

Minutes of Meeting
2023 Regular Session
April 26, 2023

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Jean-Paul P. Coussan, chairman of the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment, called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m. in Room 4, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Jean-Paul P. Coussan, chairman
Representative Ryan Bourriaque, vice chairman
Representative R. Dewith Carrier
Representative Mack Marcel Cormier
Representative Adrian Fisher
Representative Stephanie Hilferty
Representative Timothy P. Kerner
Representative Mandie Landry
Representative Scott McKnight
Representative Buddy Mincey, Jr.
Representative Joseph A. Orgeron
Representative Neil Riser
Representative Troy D. Romero
Representative Rodney Wayne Schamerhorn
Representative William "Bill" Wheat, Jr.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative Rhonda Gaye Butler

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Robin Stalder, attorney
Benjamin Westra, attorney
Lacy Slaughter, committee administrative assistant

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Angela McKnight, sergeant at arms

III. DISCUSSION OF LEGISLATION**House Bill No. 297 by Representative DeVillier**

Representative DeVillier presented House Bill No. 297, which provides a time limitation for citing intentional and simple littering violations.

Mr. Jason Stagg, Louisiana Wildlife & Fisheries, 1025 Tom Watson Road, Lake Charles, LA, no zip code provided, (337) 305-0391, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 297.

Representative Mincey offered a motion to report House Bill No. 297 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 297 was reported favorably by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Bourriaque, Cormier, Fisher, Kerner, McKnight, Mincey, Orgeron, Riser, Romero, Schamerhorn, and Wheat voted yea.

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

House Bill No. 570 by Representative Seabaugh

Representative Seabaugh presented House Bill No. 570, which establishes a monetary reward for feral hog tails.

Commissioner Mike Strain, LDAF, 3rd Floor, Capitol, no address provided, (225) 922-1233, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 570.

Ms. Rebecca Triche, LA Wildlife Federation, PO Box 65239, Baton Rouge, LA 70896, (225) 344-6707, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 570.

Representative Coussan offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 570. Without objection, action on House Bill No. 570 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Bourriaque, Cormier, Fisher, Landry, McKnight, Mincey, Orgeron, Riser, Romero, and Wheat voted yea.

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

House Bill No. 455 by Representative Coussan

Representative Coussan presented House Bill No. 455, which provides relative to rights in minerals.

Mr. Pat Ottinger, LSLI, 1313 W. Pinhook Road, Lafayette, LA 70503, (337) 501-7768, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 455.

Representative Coussan offered amendments to:

- (1) Change references from "lessee or permittee" to "servitude owner" in provision regarding responsibilities of a servitude owner.
- (2) Change references from "lessee or permittee" to "co-owner" in provision regarding responsibilities of a co-owner.
- (3) Make a technical change.

Representative Coussan offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Bourriaque, Cormier, Fisher, McKnight, Mincey, Orgeron, Schamerhorn, and Wheat voted yea.

Representative Coussan offered a motion to report House Bill No. 455 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 455 was reported with amendments by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Bourriaque, Cormier, Fisher, McKnight, Mincey, Orgeron, Schamerhorn, and Wheat 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.

House Bill No. 59 by Representative DuBuisson

Representative DuBuisson presented House Bill No. 59, which authorizes the use of personal watercraft between sunrise and sunset.

Mr. Christopher Brady, 613 N. Woods, Abita, LA 70420, (985) 577-5451, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 59.

Mr. Mike Nicaud, 623 Silverthorne Lane, Covington, LA 70433, (985) 635-1971, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 59.

Mr. Cole Garrett, LDWF, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, no phone number provided, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 59.

Lieutenant Colonel Rachel Zechenelly, Wildlife & Fisheries, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, (225) 765-2833, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 59.

Representative Orgeron offered a motion to report House Bill No. 59 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 59 was reported favorably by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Bourriaque, Cormier, Fisher, Hilferty, Kerner, Orgeron, Riser, Romero, Schamerhorn, and Wheat voted yea.

House Bill No. 438 by Representative Robert Owen

Representative Robert Owen presented House Bill No. 438, which provides relative to oyster seed ground vessel permits.

Mr. Mitch Jurisich, LA Oyster Dealers and Growers, PO Box 82, Empire, LA 70050, (504) 382-7061, spoke in support of House Bill No. 438.

Representative Orgeron offered a motion to report House Bill No. 438 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 438 was reported favorably by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Bourriaque, Cormier, Fisher, Hilferty, Kerner, McKnight, Mincey, Orgeron, and Romero 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.

House Concurrent Resolution No. 29 by Representative Kerner

Representative Kerner presented House Concurrent Resolution No. 29, which urges and requests the president of the United States to reconsider the signed agreement that facilitates growth of certain aquaculture exports from Ecuador to the United States.

Representative Cormier offered a motion to report House Concurrent Resolution No. 29 favorably. Without objection, House Concurrent Resolution No. 29 was reported favorably by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Cormier, Fisher, Hilferty, Kerner, McKnight, Mincey, Orgeron, Riser, and Wheat voted yea.

House Bill No. 627 by Representative Kerner

Representative Kerner presented House Bill No. 627, which provides relative to a fee increase for the Imported Seafood Safety Fund.

Representative Wheat offered amendments to:

- (1) Change LSU Health Sciences Center to LSU Agricultural Center as the entity performing testing.
- (2) Restore LDH as the department receiving funds appropriated in the imported seafood safety fund and receiving funds collected from the commercial seafood permit fee.

Representative Wheat offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Bourriaque, Cormier, Fisher, Hilferty, Kerner, Landry, McKnight, Mincey, Orgeron, Riser, and Wheat voted yea.

Mr. Hampton Grunewald, LSU AG Center, 101 Efferson Hall - LSU, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, (225) 578-4161, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 627.

Representative Wheat offered a motion to report House Bill No. 627 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 627 was reported with amendments by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Cormier, Fisher, Hilferty, Kerner, Landry, McKnight, Mincey, Orgeron, Riser, Romero, Schamerhorn, and Wheat voted yea.

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

House Bill No. 503 by Representative Cox

Representative Cox presented House Bill No. 503, which provides relative to hull identification numbers issued by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

Mr. Cole Garrett, LDWF, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, (225) 763-5577, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 503.

Representative Fisher offered a motion to report House Bill No. 503 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 503 was reported favorably by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Bourriaque, Carrier, Cormier, Fisher, Hilferty, Kerner, Landry, McKnight, Mincey, Orgeron, Riser, Romero, Schamerhorn, and Wheat voted yea.

House Bill No. 238 by Representative Coussan

Representative Coussan presented House Bill No. 238, which authorizes certain members of specified commissions within the Department of Natural Resources to attend and participate in meetings via teleconference or video conference.

Mr. Mike Moncla, LOGA, 1331 Lakeridge, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 377-2535, spoke in support of House Bill No. 238.

Representative Coussan offered a motion to report House Bill No. 238 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 238 was reported favorably by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Bourriaque, Carrier, Cormier, Fisher, Hilferty, Kerner, Landry, McKnight, Mincey, Orgeron, Riser, Romero, Schamerhorn, and Wheat voted yea.

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

House Bill No. 528 by Representative Cormier

Representative Cormier presented House Bill No. 528, which increases penalties for violations of shrimp and crawfish labeling requirements in food service establishments.

Mr. Acy Cooper, LA Shrimp Task Force, no address provided, (504) 912-0150, spoke in support of House Bill No. 528.

Representative Cormier offered amendments to:

- (1) Reduce the amount of fines from one thousand, two thousand, and five thousand to five hundred, one thousand, and one thousand five hundred.
- (2) Authorize the Louisiana Department of Health to suspend a food service establishment's license for a fourth violation instead of a third violation.

Representative Cormier offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Bourriaque, Carrier, Cormier, Hilferty, Kerner, Landry, McKnight, Mincey, Orgeron, Riser, Romero, Schamerhorn, and Wheat voted yea.

Vice Chairman Bourriaque in the chair.

Ms. Kimberly Chauvin, Consumer, no address provided, (985) 232-6823, spoke in support of House Bill No. 528.

Chairman Coussan back in the chair.

Mr. Stan Harris, Louisiana Restaurant Assoc., 2700 N. Arnoult Road, Metairie, LA 70002, no phone number provided, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 528.

Mr. Cole Garrett, LDWF, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, no phone number provided, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 528.

Representative Riser offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 528. Without objection, action on House Bill No. 528 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Bourriaque, Carrier, Cormier, Fisher, Hilferty, Kerner, Landry, McKnight, Mincey, Orgeron, Riser, Romero, Schamerhorn, and Wheat voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 2 in support, 4 in opposition, and 2 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 465 by Representative Hodges

Representative Hodges presented House Bill No. 465, which provides relative to the Louisiana Scenic Rivers Act, and distributed a handout, Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records.

Mr. Mark Harrell, Livingston Parish, no address provided, Livingston, LA, no zip provided, (225) 686-3066, spoke in support of House Bill No. 465.

Mr. Cole Garrett, LDWF, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, (225) 763-5577, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 465.

Mr. Chris Davis, LDWF, 2000 Quail Drive, no city, state or zip provided, (225) 765-2642, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 465.

Ms. Emily Vuxton, The Nature Conservancy, 205 North 4th Street, Baton Rouge, LA, no zip code provided, (850) 274-7725, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 465.

Ms. Rebecca Triche, LA Wildlife Federation, PO Box 65239, Baton Rouge, LA 70896, (225) 344-6707, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 465.

Mr. Caleb Holmes, Sierra Club Delta Chapter, 2455 Weldwood, no city, state, or zip code provided, (318) 638-9800, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 465.

Representative Riser offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 465. Without objection, action on House Bill No. 465 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Bourriaque, Carrier, Fisher, Hilferty, Kerner, Mincey, Orgeron, Riser, Romero, Schamerhorn, and Wheat voted yea.

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

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Wheat offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Carrier, Fisher, Hilferty, Kerner, Mincey, Orgeron, Riser, Romero, Schamerhorn, and Wheat voted yea.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Jean-Paul P. Coussan
House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment

Date adopted: