

House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment

Minutes of Meeting
2023 Regular Session
May 2, 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 9:33 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 Rhonda Gaye Butler
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 Ryan Bourriaque, vice chairman

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. 590 by Representative Bagley**

On behalf of Representative Bagley, Representative Coussan presented House Bill No. 590, which provides for the payment of royalties for a nonparticipating owner's lessor royalty owner and overriding royalty owner.

Representative Coussan offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 590. Without objection, House Bill No. 590 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Butler, Carrier, Cormier, Fisher, Kerner, McKnight, Mincey, Orgeron, Riser, and Wheat voted yea.

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

House Resolution No. 85 by Representative Mincey

Representative Mincey presented House Resolution No. 85, which urges and requests the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to research, evaluate, and make recommendations relative to allowing the use of dogs for deer hunting on the Maurepas Swamp Wildlife Management Area.

Representative Carrier offered a motion to report House Resolution No. 85 favorably. Without objection, House Resolution No. 85 was reported favorably by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Butler, Carrier, Cormier, Fisher, Kerner, McKnight, Mincey, Orgeron, and Wheat 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. 453 by Representative Mack

Representative Mack presented House Bill No. 453, which requires that carbon dioxide injected for geologic sequestration using a Class VI injection well be transported to and sequestered in a storage facility in the Gulf of Mexico.

Mr. Kinion Bankston, 31227 Horseshoe Rd., Independence, LA, no zip code provided, (225) 209-0945, spoke in support of House Bill No. 453.

Ms. Kim Coates, Tangipahoa Parish Councilwoman, 14591 Wadesboro Rd., Ponchatoula, LA 70454, (985) 969-6268, spoke in support of House Bill No. 453.

Ms. Mindy Starkey, Springfield, 25097 Blood River Rd., Springfield, LA 70462, (985) 974-6883, spoke in support of House Bill No. 453.

Mr. Robert Arcuri, St. John, 222 Surrey Dr., LaPlace, LA, no zip code provided, (504) 512-0196, spoke in support of House Bill 453.

Mr. Rocky Steele, 12078 River Highlands, Saint Amant, LA, 70774, no phone number provided, spoke in support of House Bill No. 453.

Ms. Laurie G. Sagnibene, self, 32884 Cypress Dr., Springfield, LA 70462, (225) 767-6991, spoke in support of House Bill No. 453.

Mr. Bill Whittington, Lake Maurepas Preservation Society, 28071 Hwy 444, Springfield, LA 70462, (225) 719-1614, spoke in support of House Bill No. 453.

Mr. Dean Coates, 11958 River Highlands, St. Amant, LA, no zip code provided, no phone number provided, spoke in support of House Bill No. 453.

Mr. Mark Zappi, University of Louisiana Lafayette, 309 Settlers Trace Blvd., Lafayette, LA 70508, (337) 989-0071, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 453.

Mr. Blake Canfield, LDNR, 617 N. 3rd St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-3024, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 453.

Ms. Lauren Hadden, Louisiana Association of Business and Industry, 500 Main Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 215-6658, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 453.

Mr. Tommy Faucheux, LMOGA, 730 North, Baton Rouge, LA, no zip code provided, (504) 451-9001, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 453.

Mr. Bryan J. Hanks, BETA Land, LOGA, LABI, 114 Kings Walk, Lafayette, LA 70503, (337) 406-8797, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 453.

Representative Riser in the chair.

Mr. Bob Meredith, Strategic Biofuels, PO Box 1149, Colombia, LA 71418, (225) 278-0382, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 453.

Chairman Coussan back in the chair.

Ms. Jane Patton, Center for International Environmental Law, 1607 Louisa St., New Orleans, LA 70117, (225) 266-5534, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 453.

Mr. Keith Hall, self, 2139, Arlington Ave., Baton Rouge, LA 70808, (504) 250-2636, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 453.

Representative Wheat offered a motion to report House Bill No. 453 favorably, to which Representative Riser objected. Representative Riser offered a substitute motion to involuntarily defer action on House Bill No. 453, to which Representative Wheat objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and action on House Bill No. 453 was involuntarily deferred by a vote of 11 yeas, 2 nays, and 1 abstention. Representatives Butler, Carrier, Cormier, Hilferty, Kerner, Landry, McKnight, Orgeron, Riser, Romero, and Schamerhorn voted yea. Representatives Mincey and Wheat voted nay. Representative Coussan abstained.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 11 in support, and 29 in opposition. 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: 17 in support, and 1 for information only. Copies of these statements are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 454 by Representative Mack

Representative Mack presented House Bill No. 454, which requires a local election for the approval of carbon dioxide sequestration within a parish.

Mr. Dean Coates, 11958 River Highlands, St. Amant, LA, no zip code provided, no phone number provided, spoke in support of House Bill No. 454.

Mr. Chris Alexander, LA-CAG, PO Box 64952, Baton Rouge, LA 70896, (225) 333-6434, spoke in support of House Bill No. 454.

Ms. Logan Burke, Alliance for Affordable Energy, 4505 S. Claiborne Ave., New Orleans, LA, no zip code provided, (504) 208-9761, spoke in support of House Bill No. 454.

Mr. Caleb Atwell, 32695 Cypress Dr., Springfield, LA 70462, (225) 788-6963, spoke in support of House Bill No. 454.

Mr. Eric Harrell, self, 19870 Hwy 442, Walker, LA 70785, (225) 978-9807, spoke in support of House Bill No. 454.

Mr. Mark E. Zappi, UL Lafayette, no address provided, (337) 322-4683, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 454.

Mr. Brian Landry, LA Chemical Association, 301 Main St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 205-1555, spoke on opposition to House Bill No. 454.

Mr. Brian Hanks, BETA Land, LOGA, LABI, 114 Kings Walk, Lafayette, LA 70503, (337) 406-8797, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 454.

Mr. Tommy Faucheux, LMOGA, 730 North, Baton Rouge, LA, no zip code provided, (504) 451-9001, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 454.

Mr. Keith B. Hall, self, 2139 Arlington Ave., Baton Rouge, LA 70808, (504) 250-2636, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 454.

Ms. Kaitlyn Joshua, self, 122960 Oak Colony Dr., Geismar, LA 70734, (225) 454-8321, spoke in support of House Bill No. 454.

Representative Cormier offered a motion to report House Bill No. 454 favorably, to which Representative Riser objected. Representative Riser offered a substitute motion to involuntarily defer action on House Bill No. 454, to which Representative Wheat objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and action on House Bill No. 454 was involuntarily deferred by a vote of 8 yeas, 6 nays, and 1 abstention. Representatives Carrier, Fisher, Hilferty, Kerner, McKnight, Orgeron, Riser, and Romero voted yea. Representatives Butler, Cormier, Landry, Mincey, Schamerhorn, and Wheat voted nay. Representative Coussan abstained.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 27 in support, 23 in opposition, and 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: 24 in support, and 1 for information only. Copies of these statements are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 120 by Representative Muscarello

Representative Muscarello presented House Bill No. 120, which prohibits the permitting of certain above-surface structures on Lake Maurepas and Lake Pontchartrain.

Mr. Robert Arcuri, St. John Parish, 222 Surrey Dr., LaPlace, LA, no zip code provided, spoke in support of House Bill No. 120.

Ms. Danna Leblanc, Air Products, 16044 Hwy 73, Bldg 103, Prairieville, LA 70769, (225) 229-8849, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 120, and provided a handout, Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records.

Representative Riser in the chair.

Mr. Stanley Bienemy, Air Products, 16044 Hwy 73, Building 103, Prairieville, LA 70769, (504) 644-6245, spoke in opposition to House Bill 120.

Mr. Charles Marsala, self, 231 North Roadway, New Orleans, LA, 70124, (650)333-8212, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 120.

Representative Hilferty offered a motion to report House Bill No. 120 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 120 was reported favorably by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Butler, Carrier, Cormier, Fisher, Hilferty, Kerner, McKnight, Mincey, Orgeron, Riser, Romero, Schamerhorn, and Wheat voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 15 in support, 20 in opposition, and 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: 18 in support, and 1 for information only. Copies of these statements are included in the committee records.

Chairman Coussan back in the chair.

House Bill No. 267 by Representative Wheat

Representative Wheat presented House Bill No. 267, which places a moratorium on carbon dioxide sequestration projects on Lake Maurepas and the Maurepas Swamp Wildlife Management Area and provided a handout with accompanying photos, Exhibit B, which is included in the committee records.

Ms. Kim Coates, Tangipahoa Council Woman, 1459 Wadesboro Rd., Ponchatoula, LA 70454, (985) 969-6268, spoke in support of House Bill No. 267.

Mr. Kinion Bankston, 31127 Horseshoe Rd., Independence, LA, no zip code provided, (225) 209-0945, spoke in support of House Bill No. 267.

The committee recessed at 2:31 p.m. The committee reconvened at 4:57 p.m.

Representative Cormier offered an amendment to change the length of the moratorium from ten years to six years. After discussion, Representative Cormier withdrew the amendment.

Representative Romero offered an amendment in concept to:

- (1) Reduce the term of the moratorium from ten years to seven years.

Representative Romero offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendment in concept, to which Representative Coussan objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and the motion failed to pass by a vote of 4 yeas and 7 nays. Representatives Kerner, Landry, Romero, and Schamerhorn voted yea. Representatives Coussan, Butler, Carrier, Cormier, Mincey, Orgeron, and Wheat voted nay.

John Albanese, Lake Maurepas, no address provided, (985) 502-5265, spoke in support of House Bill No. 267.

Ms. Lisa Cothorn, self, 32011 Tiboe Plaza, Springfield, LA 70462, (985) 662-1280, spoke in support of House Bill No. 267.

Mr. Darren Burns, self, 31462 Judith Dr., Springfield, LA 70462, (985) 351-6675, spoke in support of House Bill No. 267.

Mr. Mayhew Barnum, self, no street address provided, Springfield, LA, no zip code provided, no phone number provided, spoke in support of House Bill No. 267.

Mr. John Hoover, self, 11489 Jerusalem Church Rd., Hammond, LA 70403, (985) 974-3800, spoke in support of House Bill No. 267.

Mr. Caleb Holmes, Sierra Club Delta Chapter, 2455 Weldwood, Baton Rouge, LA, no zip code provided, (318) 635-9580, spoke in support of House Bill No. 267.

Mr. Arthur McKime, no street address provided, Springfield, LA, no zip code provided, no phone number provided, spoke in support of House Bill No. 267.

Mr. Paul Leblanc, no street address provided, Hammond, LA, no zip code provided, no phone number provided, spoke in support of House Bill No. 267.

Ms. Danna Leblanc, Air Products, 16044 Hwy 73, Bldg 103, Prairieville, LA 70769, (225) 229-8849, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 267, and provided a handout, Exhibit C, which is included in the committee records.

Mr. Justin J. Morocco, Air Products, 445 N. Blvd., Suite 800, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 248-2415, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 267.

Mr. Stanley Bienemy, Air Products, 16044 Hwy 73, Bldg. 103, Prairieville, LA 70769, (504) 644-6245, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 267.

Mr. Tommy Faucheux, LMOGA, 130 North Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA, no zip code provided, (504) 451-9001, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 267.

Ms. Lauren Hadden, Louisiana Association of Business & Industry, 500 Main St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 215-6658, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 267.

Mr. Bryan J. Hanks, BETA Land, LANO, LOGA, LABI, 114 Kings Walk, Lafayette, LA 70503, (337) 406-8797, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 267.

Representative Wheat offered a motion to report House Bill No. 267 favorably, to which Representative Coussan objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and House Bill No. 267 was reported favorably by a vote of 9 yeas and 5 nays. Representatives Butler, Carrier, Kerner, Landry, Mincey, Riser, Romero, Schamerhorn, and Wheat voted yea. Representatives Coussan, Cormier, Fisher, Hilferty, and Orgeron voted nay.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 36 in support, 15 in opposition, 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: 17 in support. Copies of these statements are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 308 by Representative Wheat

Representative Wheat presented House Bill No. 308, which requires an environmental impact statement as part of the coastal use permit application process for certain uses of Lake Maurepas and the Maurepas Swamp Wildlife Management Area.

Mr. Blake Canfield, LDNR, 617 N. 3rd St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-2710, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 308.

Representative Wheat offered amendments to add authorization for the secretary of the Department of Natural Resources to establish and collect fees from applicants to offset department costs related to additional environmental impact statement requirement.

Representative Wheat 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, Butler, Carrier, Cormier, Fisher, Hilferty, Kerner, Landry, Mincey, Orgeron, Riser, Romero, Schamerhorn, and Wheat voted yea.

Mr. John Albanese, Lake Maurepas, 28405 Ridge Lane, Springfield, LA 70462, (985) 507-3265, spoke in support of House Bill No. 308.

Mr. Kinion Bankston, 31127 Horse Rd., Independence, LA, no zip code provided, (225) 209-0945, spoke in support of House Bill No. 308.

Mr. Bryan J. Hanks, BETA Land, LOGA, LABI, 114 Kings Walk, Lafayette, LA 70503, (337) 406-8797, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 308.

Representative Cormier offered a motion to report House Bill No. 308 with amendments, to which Representative Riser objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and the motion failed to pass by a vote of 6 yeas, 6 nays, and 1 abstention. Representatives Cormier, Fisher, Landry, Mincey, Schamerhorn, and Wheat voted yea. Representatives Butler, Carrier, Kerner, Orgeron, Riser, and Romero voted nay. Representative Coussan abstained.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 27 in support, and 18 in opposition. 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.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

The minutes from the 2022 Regular Session dated March 23, April 6, April 13, April 19, April 27, May 4, and May 10; and the 2022-2023 Interim dated August 3, were presented to the committee for approval. Representative Wheat offered a motion to approve the minutes. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Butler, Carrier, Cormier, Fisher, Kerner, McKnight, Mincey, Orgeron, Riser, and Wheat voted yea.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Butler offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Butler, Carrier, Cormier, Fisher, Kerner, Landry, Mincey, Orgeron, Riser, Romero, Schamerhorn, and Wheat voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Date adopted: