

House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment

Minutes of Meeting
2023 Regular Session
May 10, 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 9:30 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 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
Representative Adrian Fisher

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**Senate Bill No. 59 by Senator Bernard**

Senator Bernard presented Senate Bill No. 59, which authorizes the sale of certain school property by the Natchitoches Parish School Board and the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

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

Senate Bill No. 68 by Senator Connick

Senator Connick presented Senate Bill No. 68, which provides for the lease of property located within Jefferson Parish.

Representative Kerner offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 68 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 68 was reported favorably by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Butler, Carrier, Cormier, Kerner, McKnight, Orgeron, Riser, Romero, Schamerhorn, and Wheat voted yea.

House Bill No. 10 by Representative Robby Carter

Representative Robby Carter presented House Bill No. 10, which removes eminent domain authority of carbon dioxide storage facility operators and provided a handout, Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records.

Mr. Chris Alexander, Louisiana Citizen Advocacy Group, no address provided, (225) 333-6434, spoke in support of House Bill No. 10.

Mr. Blake Canfield, LDNR, 617 N. 3rd St., Baton Rouge, LA, no zip code provided, (225) 342-3024, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 10.

Mr. Bob Meredith, Strategic Biofuels, PO Box 1269, Columbia, LA 71418, (318) 502-4053, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 10.

Mr. Thomas Smart, LOGA, 400 E. Kaliste Saloom, Suite 3000, Lafayette, LA 70508, (337) 237-2660, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 10.

Mr. Bryan Hanks, BETA Land Services, LOGA, LABI, 114 Kings Walk, Lafayette, LA 70503, (337) 406-8797, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 10.

Mr. Tommy Faucheux, LMOGA, 730 North, Baton Rouge, LA, no zip code provided, (504) 451-9007, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 10.

Representative Cormier offered a motion to report House Bill No. 10 favorably, to which Representative Riser objected. Representative Riser offered a substitute motion to involuntarily defer action on House Bill No. 10, to which Representative Cormier objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and action on House Bill No. 10 was involuntarily deferred by a vote of 9 yeas, 4 nays, and 1 abstention. Representatives Butler, Carrier, Hilferty, Kerner, McKnight, Orgeron, Riser, Romero, and Schamerhorn voted yea. Representatives Cormier, Landry, Mincey, and Wheat voted nay. Representative Coussan abstained.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 32 in support, 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: 15 in support. Copies of these statements are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 100 by Senator Lambert

Senator Lambert presented Senate Bill No. 100, which provides for advanced recycling facilities.

Ms. Stephanie Cargile, Exxon Mobil, 4045 Scenic Hwy., Baton Rouge, LA 70805, (225) 326-4662, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 100 and presented a video recording.

Representative Riser in the chair.

Mr. Rudy Underwood, American Chemistry Council, 3049 Moss Stone Lane, Marietta, GA 30064, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 100.

Mr. Caleb Holmes, Sierra Club Delta, 2455 Weldwood, Baton Rouge, LA, no zip code provided, (318) 638-7120, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 100.

Representative Schamerhorn offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 100 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 100 was reported favorably by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays.

Representatives Butler, Carrier, Cormier, Kerner, Landry, McKnight, Orgeron, Riser, Schamerhorn, and Wheat voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 10 in support, 14 in opposition, and 2 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 312 by Representative Robby Carter

Representative Robby Carter presented House Bill No. 312, which provides relative to liability and damages resulting from carbon sequestration.

Representative Cormier offered amendments to:

- (1) Remove the strict liability provision applicable to damages attributable to an owner or operator's actions concerning the geologic sequestration of carbon dioxide.
- (2) Make technical changes.

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

Mr. Dean Coates, 11958 River Highlands Dr., St. Amant, LA 70774, no phone number provided, spoke in support of House Bill No. 312.

Mr. Caleb Holmes, Sierra Club Delta Chapter, 2455 Weldwood, Baton Rouge, LA, no zip code provided, (318) 638-7500, spoke in support of House Bill No. 312.

Mr. Jackson Voss, Alliance For Affordable Energy, 4505 S. Claiborne Ave., New Orleans, LA 70175, (985) 789-2574, spoke in support of House Bill No. 312.

Mr. Neil Abramson, Carbon Capture Solutions, Strategic Biofuels, 701 Poydras, New Orleans, LA, no zip code provided, no phone number provided, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 312.

Representative Coussan offered a motion to report House Bill No. 312 with amendments with recommendation that it be recommitted to the Committee on Civil Law and Procedure. Without objection, House Bill No. 312 was reported with amendments with recommendation that it be recommitted to the Committee on Civil Law and Procedure by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Coussan, Butler, Carrier, Cormier, Hilferty, Kerner, Landry, McKnight, Mincey, Orgeron, Riser, Schamerhorn, and Wheat voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 27 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: 2 in support. Copies of these statements are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 35 by Representative Robby Carter

Representative Robby Carter presented House Bill No. 35, which prohibits carbon dioxide sequestration projects in St. Helena Parish.

Chairman Coussan back in the chair.

Mr. Caleb Holmes, Sierra Club Delta Chapter, 2455 Weldwood, Baton Rouge, LA, no zip code provided, (318) 638-9500, spoke in support of House Bill No. 35.

Mr. Peter Robins-Brown, Louisiana Progress Action, 650 N. 6th St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (504) 256-8196, spoke in support of House Bill No. 35.

Mr. Tommy Faucheux, LMOGA, 730 North, Baton Rouge, LA, no zip code provided, (504) 451-9001, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 35.

Ms. Lauren Hadden, LABI, 500 Main St., Baton Rouge, LA 70801, (225) 215-6658, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 35.

Ms. Sarah Rhodes, Shell USA, 616 Spanish Town Road, Baton Rouge, LA, no zip code provided, (225) 202-4061, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 35.

Mr. Fred Palmer, Shell USA, 525 Lafayette St., #522, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (504) 232-2027, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 35.

Mr. Robert H. Baumann, Hood Baumann, 616 Spanish Town Rd., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 328-0330, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 35.

Mr. Bryan Hanks, BETA Land Services, LOGA, LABI, 114 Kings Walk, Lafayette, LA 70503, (337) 406-8797, spoke in opposition to House bill No. 35.

Mr. Bob Meredith, Strategic Biofuels, PO Box 1269, Columbia, LA 71418, (318) 502-4053, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 35.

Representative Cormier offered a motion to report House Bill No. 35 favorably, to which Representative Carrier objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and the motion failed to pass by a vote of 5 yeas, 7 nays, and 1 abstention. Representatives Cormier, Hilferty, Landry, Mincey, and Wheat voted yea. Representatives Butler, Carrier, Kerner, Orgeron, Riser, Romero, and Schamerhorn voted nay. Representative Coussan abstained.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 27 in support, 16 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: 3 in support. Copies of these statements are included in the committee records.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was adjourned at 2:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Date adopted: