

House Committee on Ways and Means

Minutes of Meeting
2023 Regular Session
May 9, 2023

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Stuart J. Bishop, chairman of the House Committee on Ways and Means, called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m. in Room 6, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Stuart J. Bishop, chairman
Representative Gerald "Beau" Beaulieu, IV, vice chairman
Representative Ryan Bourriaque
Representative Marcus Anthony Bryant
Representative Phillip R. DeVillier
Representative Les Farnum
Representative Jeremy S. LaCombe
Representative Mandie Landry
Representative Wayne McMahan
Representative Buddy Mincey, Jr.
Representative Joseph A. Orgeron
Representative Tammy T. Phelps
Representative Neil Riser
Representative Laurie Schlegel
Representative Malinda B. White
Representative Matthew Willard

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative Rhonda Gaye Butler
Representative Tanner D. Magee

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Brittany Lea, committee administrative assistant
Drew Murray, legislative analyst
Alison Pryor, senior attorney

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Janet Anthony, sergeant at arms
Angela McKnight, sergeant at arms

III. DISCUSSION OF LEGISLATION**House Bill No. 635 by Representative Hollis**

Representative Hollis presented House Bill No. 635, which increases the rate of the excise tax on vapor products and electronic cigarettes and dedicates a portion of the avails of such increase to payment of salaries and related benefits for La. State Police.

Representative Bishop offered an amendment to change the increase of the tax levied on vapor products and electronic cigarettes from 15% of the retail sales price of vapor products and electronic cigarettes to \$0.30 per milliliter of consumable nicotine liquid solution. Representative Bishop offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Bishop, Beaulieu, Bourriaque, Bryant, DeVillier, Farnum, LaCombe, Landry, McMahan, Mincey, Orgeron, Phelps, Schlegel, White, and Willard voted yea.

Representative Bishop offered an amendment to change the amount of the tax proceeds dedicated to the La. State Police Salary Fund from one-half of the avails of the excise tax on vapor products and electronic cigarettes to the first \$22M of the avails of the excise tax levied on vapor products and electronic cigarettes. Representative Bishop offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 16 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Bishop, Beaulieu, Bourriaque, Bryant, DeVillier, Farnum, LaCombe, Landry, McMahan, Mincey, Orgeron, Phelps, Riser, Schlegel, White, and Willard voted yea.

Colonel Lamar Davis, superintendent, Louisiana State Police, 7919 Independence Boulevard, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70806, (225) 925-6118, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 635.

Mr. Luke Morris, deputy secretary, Louisiana Department of Revenue (DOR), 617 North 3rd Street, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802, (985) 662-8411, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 635.

Mr. Kevin Richard, secretary, Louisiana Department of Revenue (DOR), 617 North 3rd Street, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802, (225) 219-2704, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 635.

Representative Beaulieu in the chair.

Mr. Rob Shadoin, secretary, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF), 3232 Pointe Marie Drive, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70820, (318) 568-5685, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 635.

Lieutenant Ryan Faul, enforcement division recruiting coordinator, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808, (225) 705-2800, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 635.

Colonel Chad Hebert, head of enforcement division, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808, (225) 765-2990, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 635.

Mr. Hugh Raetzsch, president/CEO, Lyons Specialty Company, LLC, 2800 Highway 1 North, Port Allen, Louisiana 70767, (225) 356-1319, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 635.

Mr. Jack Casanova, president/CEO, Church Point Wholesale, P.O. Box 189, Church Point, Louisiana 70525, (337) 278-5323, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 635.

Representative DeVillier offered a motion to report House Bill No. 635 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 635 was reported with amendments by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Bishop, Beaulieu, Bourriaque, Bryant, DeVillier, LaCombe, McMahan, Mincey, Orgeron, Phelps, Riser, Schlegel, White, and Willard voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 3 in support and 4 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: 2 in opposition. Copies of these statements are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 364 by Representative Bishop

Representative Bishop offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 364, which phases-out the corporate franchise tax over four years. Without objection, action on House Bill No. 364 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Bishop, Beaulieu, Bourriaque, Bryant, DeVillier, LaCombe, McMahan, Mincey, Orgeron, Phelps, Riser, Schlegel, White, and Willard voted yea.

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

House Bill No. 387 by Representative Bishop

Representative Bishop offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 387, which repeals the corporation franchise tax and removes eligibility of certain tax credits to be claimed against corporation franchise tax. Without objection, action on House Bill No. 387 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Bishop, Beaulieu, Bourriaque, Bryant, DeVillier, LaCombe, McMahan, Mincey, Orgeron, Phelps, Riser, Schlegel, White, and Willard voted yea.

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

House Bill No. 641 by Representative Bishop

Representative Bishop presented House Bill No. 641, which provides for the termination of certain tax exemptions, exclusions, credits, deductions, and other tax incentives.

Ms. Karen White, executive counsel, Louisiana Municipal Association (LMA), 6767 Perkins Road, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808, (225) 344-5001, spoke in support of House Bill No. 641.

Representative White offered a motion to report House Bill No. 641 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 641 was reported favorably by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Bishop, Beaulieu, Bourriaque, Bryant, DeVillier, Farnum, LaCombe, Landry, McMahan, Mincey, Orgeron, Riser, Schlegel, White, and Willard voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 3 in support, 2 in opposition, and 1 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 491 by Representative Marcelle

Representative Marcelle presented House Bill No. 491, which repeals the automatic reduction in individual income tax rates and the corporation franchise tax rate if certain revenue thresholds are met.

Mr. Paul Braun, tax policy analyst, Louisiana Budget Project (LBP), 619 Jefferson Highway, Suite 1-D, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70816, (225) 571-0460, spoke in support of House Bill No. 491.

Mr. Davante Lewis, director of public affairs and outreach, Louisiana Budget Project (LBP), 619 Jefferson Highway, Suite 1-D, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70816, (337) 377-5110, spoke in support of House Bill No. 491.

Representative Willard offered a motion to report House Bill No. 491 favorably, to which Representative DeVillier objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and the motion failed to pass by a vote of 4 yeas and 9 nays. Representatives Bryant, Landry, Phelps, and Willard voted yea. Representatives Beaulieu, Bourriaque, DeVillier, LaCombe, McMahan, Orgeron, Riser, Schlegel, and White voted nay.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 2 in support and 7 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Representative Beaulieu announced that House Bill Nos. 173, 197, 214, 246, and 495 have been voluntarily deferred.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Stuart J. Bishop
House Committee on Ways and Means