

House Committee on Administration of Criminal Justice

Minutes of Meeting
2025 Regular Session
May 8, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Debbie Villio, chair of the House Committee on Administration of Criminal Justice, called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. in Room 6, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Debbie Villio, chair
Representative Roy Daryl Adams
Representative Tony Bacala
Representative Chad Michael Boyer
Representative Vincent E. Cox, III
Representative Bryan Fontenot
Representative Dodie Horton
Representative Alonzo L. Knox
Representative Vanessa Caston LaFleur, vice chair
Representative Patricia "Pat" Moore
Representative Joy Walters
Representative Jeffrey Fons "Jeff" Wiley

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Zachary Gonzalez, attorney
Dave Storment, attorney
Ross Richard, committee administrative assistant
Andrea Jerezano, committee administrative assistant

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Michael McCain, clerk
Angela McKnight, sergeant at arms
Janet Anthony, sergeant at arms

III. DISCUSSION OF LEGISLATION

House Bill No. 252 by Representative Moore

On behalf of the author, Representative Villio announced that action on House Bill No.252, which provides relative to the financial obligations of criminal offenders, was voluntarily deferred.

House Concurrent Resolution No. 9 by Representative Hebert

Representative Hebert presented House Concurrent Resolution No. 9, which directs the Louisiana State Law Institute to study the procedures for the recusal of judges.

Representative Bacala offered an amendment to add justices of the peace as topics of the study to be conducted. Representative Bacala offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendment. Without objection, the amendment was adopted by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Bacala, Boyer, Fontenot, Horton, Knox, LaFleur, Moore, Walters, and Wiley voted yea.

Representative Bacala offered a motion to report House Concurrent Resolution No. 9 with amendments. Without objection, House Concurrent Resolution No. 9 was reported with amendments by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Bacala, Boyer, Fontenot, Horton, Knox, LaFleur, Moore, Walters, and Wiley voted yea.

House Bill No. 11 by Representative Boyer

Representative Boyer presented House Bill No. 11, which provides relative to sentencing for certain offenses.

Alexis Jolivet, 118 Fairwood Drive, Broussard, LA 70518, spoke in support of House Bill No. 11.

Kip Judice, Dusan Police and Louisiana Association of Chiefs of Police, 1916 Mills Street, Scott, LA 70503, spoke in support of House Bill No. 11.

Charles Broussard, Jr., Police Association of Lafayette, 2311 Cameron Street, Lafayette, LA 70506, spoke in support of House Bill No. 11.

Paul Trouard, Lafayette Police Department, 900 East University Avenue, Lafayette, LA 70506, spoke in support of House Bill No. 11.

Clay Morgan, Richland Parish, 1893 Highway 583, Rayville, LA 71269, spoke in support of House Bill No. 11.

Representative Boyer offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 11, to which Representative Walters objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and action on House

Bill No. 11 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 11 yeas and 1 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Bacala, Boyer, Cox, Fontenot, Horton, Knox, LaFleur, Moore, and Wiley voted yea. Representative Walters voted nay.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 22 in support and 2 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Representative LaFleur in the chair.

House Bill No. 447 by Representative Farnum

Representative Farnum presented House Bill No. 447, which provides relative to the office of the state public defender.

Chair Villio in the chair.

On behalf of the author, Representative Wiley offered amendments to:

- (1) Make technical changes.
- (2) Remove the requirement that the governor's appointment of the state public defender is subject to approval of a majority of the Louisiana Public Defender Oversight Board.
- (3) Provide that the attorney-client privilege and confidentiality that applies to counsel in cases shall apply to the office, rather than all staff, for the review of case details.
- (4) Add all database entries or other data collection methods of the office as privileged materials to be preserved by the office in compliance with the Louisiana Rules of Professional Conduct and prohibit court-ordered disclosure of such information.
- (5) Authorize the office of the state public defender to create advisory boards as necessary to assist the office with the administration of its duties and implementation of its policies.
- (6) Clarify that the office shall form a district public defender selection committee within twenty days of receiving notice of a vacancy in general, rather than notice of a vacancy by reason of demotion, termination, retirement, resignation, or death, which occurs for the position of district public defender.
- (7) Establish the Louisiana Public Defender Oversight Board as an advisory board to the office of the state public defender and provide for the composition and authority of the board.

Remy Starns, office of state public defender, no address provided, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 447.

Representative Wiley offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Bacala, Cox, Horton, LaFleur, Moore, Walters, and Wiley voted yea.

John Sinquefield, Louisiana Department of Justice, Livingston Building, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke in support of House Bill No. 447.

Brett Brunson, Natchitoches Public Defender Office, Natchitoches, LA 71457, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 447.

Trisha Ward, Thirteenth Judicial District Public Defender Office, 128 Young Street, Ville Platte, LA 70586, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 447.

Michelle M. Andrepont, Caddo Parish District Public Defender, 400 Travis Street, Suite 2000, Shreveport, LA 71101, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 447.

John Hogue, Sixth Judicial District Indigent Defender, 1602A Felicia Drive, Tallulah, LA 71282, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 447.

Deirdre Fuller, Rapides Parish Public Defender's Office, 620 Murray Street, Alexandria, LA 71301, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 447.

Representative LaFleur offered a motion to involuntarily defer action on House Bill No. 447.

Jean Faria, 347 Shady Lake Parkway, Baton Rouge, LA 70810, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 447.

Daniel Ginnetty, Louisiana Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, 310 North Cherry Street, Hammond, LA 70401, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 447.

Nathan Fennell, Deason Criminal Justice Reform Center, Post Office Box 750116, Dallas, TX 75275, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 447.

Pamela Metzger, Deason Criminal Justice Reform Center, 3300 University Boulevard, Dallas, TX 75205, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 447.

Representative LaFleur withdrew her motion to involuntarily defer action on House Bill No. 447.

At the request of the author, Representative LaFleur offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 447. Without objection, action on House Bill No. 447 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Bacala, Boyer, Cox, Fontenot, Horton, Knox, LaFleur, Moore, Walters, and Wiley voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 3 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Concurrent Resolution No. 18 by Representative Bayham

On behalf of the author, Representative Villio announced that action on House Concurrent Resolution No. 18, which creates a task force to study funding mechanisms for the office of the state public defender, was voluntarily deferred.

House Bill No. 516 by Representative Adams

Representative Adams offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 516, which provides relative to the office of the state public defender. Without objection, action on House Bill No. 516 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Bacala, Cox, Fontenot, Knox, LaFleur, Moore, and Walters voted yea.

House Bill No. 425 by Representative Carlson

Representative Carlson presented House Bill No. 425, which provides relative to coerced abortion and reporting requirements.

On behalf of the author, Representative Boyer offered amendments to:

- (1) Make technical changes.
- (2) Within the present law offense of extortion, add a threat intended to compel a pregnant woman to have an abortion as defined in present law (R.S. 14:87.1) as conduct that constitutes extortion.
- (3) Clarify that physical force against a pregnant woman is an element of the present law crime of coerced abortion.
- (4) Change the conduct within the present law (R.S. 14:87.6) crime of coerced abortion that constitutes physical force, control, or intimidation to include any of the following:
 - (a) Battery as defined in present law (R.S. 14:33).
 - (b) Assault as defined in present law (R.S. 14:36).
 - (c) Simple kidnapping as defined in present law (R.S. 14:45).
 - (d) False imprisonment as defined in present law (R.S. 14:46).
 - (e) Extortion as defined in present law (R.S. 14:66).
- (5) Restore provisions of present law relative to mandatory reporting.

Representative Boyer offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Boyer, Cox, Fontenot, Knox, Moore, Walters, and Wiley voted yea.

Erica Bayles Inzina, Louisiana Right to Life, 200 Allen Toussaint Boulevard, New Orleans, LA 70124, spoke in support of House Bill No. 425.

Allison Daigle, Woman's New Life Clinic, 4612 South Claiborne Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70125, spoke in support of House Bill No. 425.

Representative LaFleur in the chair.

Ellie Schilling, 909 Poydras Street, New Orleans, LA 70112, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 425.

Kaitlyn Joshua, 12296 Oak Colony Drive, Geismar, LA 70734, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 425.

Daniel Ginnetty, LACDL, 310 North Cherry Street, Hammond, LA 70401, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 425.

Sarah Zagurski, Louisiana Right to Life, 200 Allen Toussaint Boulevard, New Orleans, LA 70124, spoke in support of House Bill No. 425.

Representative Horton offered a motion to report House Bill No. 425 with amendments, to which Representative Walters objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and House Bill No. 425 was reported with amendments by a vote of 11 yeas and 1 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Bacala, Boyer, Cox, Fontenot, Horton, Knox, LaFleur, Moore, and Wiley voted yea. Representative Walters voted nay.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 5 in support and 33 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 425.

Chair Villio in the chair.

House Bill No. 512 by Representative Phelps

Representative Phelps presented House Bill No. 512, which provides relative to criminal blighting of property.

Representative Bacala offered amendments to make technical changes and remove provisions of proposed law that expanded the definition of the term "blighted property". Representative Bacala offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Bacala, Boyer, Cox, Fontenot, Horton, Knox, LaFleur, Moore, Walters, and Wiley voted yea.

Representative Bacala offered a motion to reconsider the previously adopted amendments. Without objection, the amendments were reconsidered by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Bacala, Boyer, Cox, Fontenot, Horton, Knox, LaFleur, Moore, Walters, and Wiley voted yea.

Representative Bacala offered amendments to make technical changes and restore provisions of present law relative to the definition of "blighted property". Representative Bacala offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Bacala, Boyer, Cox, Fontenot, Horton, Knox, LaFleur, Moore, Walters, and Wiley voted yea.

Representative Bacala offered a motion to report House Bill No. 512 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 512 was reported with amendments by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Bacala, Boyer, Cox, Fontenot, Horton, Knox, LaFleur, Moore, Walters, and Wiley voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 3 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 171 by Representative Coates

Representative Coates presented House Bill No. 171, which provides relative to the compensation of members of the committee on parole.

Francis Abbott, Louisiana Board of Pardon and Parole, 504 Mayflower Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 171.

Representative LaFleur offered a motion to report House Bill No. 171 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 171 was reported favorably by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Bacala, Boyer, Fontenot, Horton, Knox, LaFleur, Moore, Walters, and Wiley 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. 584 by Representative Lyons

Representative Lyons presented House Bill No. 584, which provides relative to the Back on Track Youth Pilot Program.

On behalf of the author, Representative LaFleur offered amendments to:

- (1) Make technical changes.
- (2) Remove the change in allocation of annual savings to the Department of Public Safety and Corrections that are attributable to criminal justice reforms.
- (3) Allocate fifteen percent of the annual savings that are attributable to criminal justice reforms to the Louisiana Children's Trust Fund Board for administration and operation of the Back on Track Youth Pilot Program as provided in present law (R.S. 15:951).

Representative LaFleur offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Bacala, Boyer, Cox, Fontenot, Horton, Knox, LaFleur, Moore, Walters, and Wiley voted yea.

Representative LaFleur offered a motion to report House Bill No. 584 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 584 was reported with amendments by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Bacala, Boyer, Cox, Fontenot, Horton, Knox, LaFleur, Moore, Walters, and Wiley 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.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair Debbie Villio
House Committee on Administration of Criminal Justice