

House Committee on Civil Law and Procedure

Minutes of Meeting
2025 Regular Session
May 13, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Nicholas Muscarello, Jr., chair of the House Committee on Civil Law and Procedure, called the meeting to order at 10:13 a.m. in Room 4, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Nicholas Muscarello, Jr., chair
Representative Chad Brown
Representative Josh Carlson
Representative Emily Chenevert
Representative Kathy Edmonston
Representative Peter F. Egan, Sr.
Representative Brian Leonard Glorioso
Representative Michael T. Johnson
Representative Ed Larvadain, III
Representative Michael Melerine
Representative Sylvia Elaine Taylor
Representative Christopher Turner, vice chair
Representative John E. Wyble

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative Wilford Dan Carter, Sr.
Representative Lauren Ventrella
Representative Mark Wright

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Allison Alonzo, attorney
Jennifer Nguyen, attorney
Andrea Jerezano, committee administrative assistant

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Angela McKnight, sergeant at arms
Michael McCain, clerk
Amelia Carman, clerk
Don-Trae' Davis, clerk

III. DISCUSSION OF LEGISLATION**House Bill No. 271 by Representative Willard**

Representative Willard presented House Bill No. 271, a constitutional amendment which authorizes a parish governing authority to increase the amount of the homestead exemption.

Representative Muscarello offered a motion to adopt the House Rule 6.8(A) Report to House Bill No. 271, which stated that the measure could not be accomplished statutorily and would, therefore, require a constitutional amendment. Without objection, the House Rule 6.8(A) Report to House Bill No. 271 was adopted by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Muscarello, Brown, Carlson, Edmonston, Egan, Larvadain, Melerine, Taylor, and Wyble voted yea.

Representative Muscarello offered an amendment to make a technical correction to the ballot language. Representative Muscarello offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendment. Without objection, the amendment was adopted by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Muscarello, Brown, Carlson, Edmonston, Egan, Larvadain, Melerine, Taylor, and Wyble voted yea.

Representative Larvadain offered a motion to report House Bill No. 271 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 271 was reported with amendments by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Muscarello, Brown, Carlson, Edmonston, Egan, Larvadain, Melerine, Taylor, and Wyble voted yea.

Senate Bill No. 156 by Senator Pressly

Senator Pressly presented Senate Bill No. 156, which provides for in vitro fertilization.

Katie Bliss, Louisiana Fertility Alliance, 6045 Chandler Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 156.

Representative Melerine offered an amendment to provide immunity from criminal liability to a provider of goods. Representative Melerine offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendment. Without objection, the amendment was adopted by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Muscarello, Brown, Carlson, Edmonston, Egan, Glorioso, Larvadain, Melerine, Taylor, and Wyble voted yea.

Representative Melerine offered an amendment to provide that an in vitro fertilized human embryo that fails to develop further over a seventy-two hour period from fertilization would be defined as a "nonviable in vitro fertilized human embryo". Representative Melerine offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendment. Without objection, the amendment was adopted by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Muscarello, Brown, Carlson, Edmonston, Egan, Glorioso, Mike Johnson, Larvadain, Melerine, Taylor, and Wyble voted yea.

Dr. W. Jay Huber, III, Louisiana Fertility Alliance/FINO, 314 Audubon Street, New Orleans, LA 70118, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 156.

Tanner Magee, former state representative, no address provided, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 156.

Dorinda Bordlee Plaisance, Bioethics Legal Consultant to Right to Life, no address provided, New Orleans, LA, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 156.

Erica Bayles Inzina, Louisiana Right to Life, 200 Allen Toussaint Boulevard, New Orleans, LA, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 156.

Dr. Damon Cudihy, Acadiana OB/GYN, 715 Coolidge Street, Lafayette, LA 70503, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 156.

Ben Clapper, Louisiana Right to Life, 200 Allen Toussaint, New Orleans, LA 70124, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 156.

Deborah Melvin, 322 Cedar Tree Drive, Thibodaux, LA 70301, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 156.

Kathleen Benfield, Louisiana Family Forum, 655 St. Ferdinand Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 156.

Representative Melerine offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 156 with amendments, to which Representative Carlson objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and Senate Bill No. 156 was reported with amendments by a vote of 8 yeas and 4 nays. Representatives Muscarello, Brown, Mike Johnson, Larvadain, Melerine, Taylor, Turner, and Wyble voted yea. Representatives Carlson, Edmonston, Egan, and Glorioso voted nay.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 16 in support and 17 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for Senate Bill No. 156.

House Bill No. 597 by Representative Robby Carter

Representative Robby Carter presented House Bill No. 597, which enacts the Speedy Tort Claims Act, and he provided a handout, Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records.

At the request of the author, Representative Muscarello offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 597. Without objection, action on House Bill No. 597 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Muscarello, Brown, Carlson, Edmonston, Egan, Glorioso, Mike Johnson, Larvadain, Melerine, and Taylor voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 8 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 168 by Senator Womack

On behalf of Senator Womack, Representative Riser presented Senate Bill No. 168, which provides for liberative prescription on mineral leases on state property.

On behalf of the author, Representative Muscarello offered an amendment to change the prescriptive period from five years to ten years. Representative Muscarello offered a motion to adopt the amendment. Without objection, the amendment was adopted by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Muscarello, Brown, Carlson, Egan, Glorioso, Mike Johnson, Larvadain, Melerine, and Taylor voted yea.

Representative Muscarello offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 168 with amendments. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 168 was reported with amendments by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Muscarello, Brown, Carlson, Egan, Glorioso, Mike Johnson, Larvadain, Melerine, and Taylor voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 4 in support and 1 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 193 by Representative Amedee

Representative Amedee presented House Bill No. 193, which provides relative to lawsuit procedures for incarcerated individuals.

Natalie LaBorde, office of the attorney general, no address provided, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 193.

Alex Reinboth, designee of the attorney general, 1885 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, spoke as a designee of the attorney general in support of House Bill No. 193.

Wendy Clark, a concerned citizen, 50199 Whiskey Lane, Tickfaw, LA 70466, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 193.

Representative Muscarello offered a motion to report House Bill No. 193 favorably, to which Representative Taylor objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and House Bill No. 193 was reported favorably by a vote of 7 yeas and 2 nays. Representatives Muscarello, Brown, Carlson, Edmonston, Egan, Glorioso, and Melerine voted yea. Representatives Larvadain and Taylor voted nay.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 1 in support, 1 in opposition, and 1 designee of an elected official. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 199 by Representative Edmonston

Representative Edmonston presented House Bill No. 199, which provides relative to proceedings in forma pauperis for prisoners.

Representative Edmonston offered amendments to:

- (1) Make technical changes.
- (2) Provide that a prisoner who is no longer incarcerated at the time of his application to proceed in forma pauperis is required to submit an affidavit of the prisoner's present assets and any supporting documentation.
- (3) Specify the requirements for partial filing fees based on a trust account or institutional equivalent.
- (4) Specify the requirements for a partial filing fee based on a prisoner's present assets.

Representative Edmonston offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Muscarello, Brown, Carlson, Edmonston, Egan, Glorioso, Larvadain, Melerine, and Taylor voted yea.

Alex Reinboth, 1885 North Third, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke as a designee of the attorney general in support of House Bill No. 199.

Natalie LaBorde, office of the attorney general, no address provided, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 199.

Larry Frieman, chief deputy attorney general, 1885 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke as a designee of the attorney general in support of House Bill No. 199.

Representative Muscarello offered a motion to report House Bill No. 199 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 199 was reported with amendments by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Muscarello, Brown, Carlson, Edmonston, Egan, Glorioso, Larvadain, Melerine, and Taylor voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 5 in support and 1 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair Nicholas Muscarello, Jr.
House Committee on Civil Law and Procedure