

House Committee on Municipal, Parochial and Cultural Affairs

Minutes of Meeting
2025 Regular Session
May 15, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Foy Bryan Gadberry, chair of the House Committee on Municipal, Parochial and Cultural Affairs, called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m. in Room 6, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Foy Bryan Gadberry, chair
Representative Michael Robert "Mike" Bayham, Jr.
Representative Beth Anne Billings
Representative Kim Carver
Representative Vincent E. Cox, III
Representative Les Farnum
Representative Bryan Fontenot
Representative Barbara Reich Freiberg, vice chair
Representative Steven Jackson
Representative Alonzo L. Knox
Representative Rodney Lyons
Representative C. Denise Marcelle
Representative Patricia "Pat" Moore
Representative Candace N. Newell
Representative Charles Anthony Owen
Representative Joseph A. Stagni
Representative Matthew Willard
Representative Rashid Armand Young

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative Jessica Domangue

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Tina Righteous, attorney
Blake Byrom, legislative analyst
Natayveon Howard-Williams, committee administrative assistant

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Frank Meyer IV, clerk
Janet Anthony, sergeant at arms
Ralph Palmer, sergeant at arms

III. DISCUSSION OF LEGISLATION

Representative Owen offered a motion to adopt three-minute rule. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Farnum, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Marcelle, Moore, and Owen voted yea.

House Bill No. 47 by Representative Dewitt

Representative Dewitt presented House Bill No. 47, which provides relative to the classified police service in the city of Alexandria.

Representative Dewitt provided a spreadsheet relative to the classified police service, labeled Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records.

Chief Chad Gremillion, Alexandria Police Department, 1600 Bolton Avenue, Alexandria, LA, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 47.

Thomas Rodney, Alexandria Police Officers Association, Local 833, 619 Ballon Chapal Road, Pineville, LA 71360, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 47.

Adrienne Bordelon, Office of State Examiner, 7722 Office Park Boulevard, Suite 500, Baton Rouge, LA 70809, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 47.

Jacques M. Roy, mayor of the city of Alexandria, 915 Third Street, Alexandria, LA 71301, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 47.

Representative Freiberg offered a motion to report House Bill No. 47 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 47 was reported favorably by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Farnum, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Lyons, Moore, Stagni, and Young voted yea.

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

House Bill No. 610 by Representative Hilferty

On behalf of Representative Hilferty, Helena Moreno, New Orleans City Council, 1300 Perdido, no city or state provided, and Walter Leger, III, New Orleans and Company, 2020 St. Charles Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70130, presented House Bill No. 610, which provides relative to the levy of a tax on short-term rentals of overnight lodging in the city of New Orleans.

Robert C. Braxton, Airbnb, 543 Spanish Town Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 610.

Stacey Rase, Airbnb, 76406 Highway 25, Covington, LA 70435, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 610.

Hunter C. Hamberlin, Taxpayer Protection Alliance, 1101 14th Street NW, Washington, D.C., 20005, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 610.

Ruth Whitaker, Chamber of Progress, 735 Lamont Street, Washington, D.C., spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 610.

Representative Gadberry offered amendments to:

1. Decrease the proposed law maximum tax authorized to be levied from 10% to 7.75%.
2. Add a requirement that an online platform provide certain information to a party who has rented a short-term rental through the online platform.

Representative Gadberry offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Farnum, Fontenot, Freiberg, Knox, Lyons, Moore, Owen, Stagni, and Young voted yea.

Representative Knox offered a motion to report House Bill No. 610 with amendments, to which Representative Jackson objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and House Bill No. 610 was reported with amendments by a vote of 12 yeas and 2 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Farnum, Freiberg, Knox, Moore, Newell, Stagni, Willard, and Young voted yea. Representatives Jackson and Marcelle voted nay.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 9 in support, and 6 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 610.

House Bill No. 296 by Representative Freiberg

Representative Freiberg presented House Bill No. 296, which authorizes the governing authority of East Baton Rouge Parish to distribute sales and use tax revenue collected on the sale of admission tickets to and concessions and parking at certain events.

B. Trey Godfrey, Baton Rouge Area Chamber, 564 Laurel, Baton Rouge, LA 70801, spoke in support of House Bill No. 296.

Representative Marcelle offered a motion to report House Bill No. 296 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 296 was reported favorably by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Farnum, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Newell, Stagni, and Young 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. 179 by Representative Marcelle

Representative Marcelle presented House Bill No. 179, which provides relative to the board of commissioners for the Capital Area Transit System.

George DeCuir, Jr., ATU 1546, P.O. Box 4223, Baton Rouge, LA 70821, spoke in support of House Bill No. 179.

Representative Gadberry offered technical amendments.

Representative Gadberry offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Newell, Owen, Stagni, and Young voted yea.

Representative Stagni offered a motion to report House Bill No. 179 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 179 was reported with amendments by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Newell, Owen, Stagni, and Young voted yeas.

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. 240 by Representative LaFleur

Representative LaFleur presented House Bill No. 240, which provides relative to the Brookstown Neighborhood Crime Prevention District in East Baton Rouge Parish.

Representative Jackson offered a motion to report House Bill No. 240 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 240 was reported favorably by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Newell, Stagni, and Young voted yeas.

House Bill No. 267 by Representative LaCombe

Vice Chair Freiberg in the chair.

On behalf of Representative LaCombe, Representative Gadberry presented House Bill No. 267, which creates the Hotel Francis District within the town of St. Francisville.

Ryan Haynie, Louisiana Travel Association, P.O. Box 44032, Baton Rouge, LA 70801, spoke in support of House Bill No. 267.

Shanna Boudreaux, P.O. Box 880, St. Francisville, LA 70775, spoke in support of House Bill No. 267.

Representative Lyons offered an amendment to change the definition of "hotel".

Representative Lyons offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Newell, Stagni, and Young voted yeas.

Representative Lyons offered a motion to report House Bill No. 267 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 267 was reported with amendments by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Newell, Stagni, and Young voted yeas.

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

Chair Gadberry in the chair.

House Bill No. 298 by Representative Knox

Representative Knox presented House Bill No. 298, which provides relative to the Ernest N. Morial-New Orleans Exhibition Hall Authority.

Brennan Black, Foley and Judell, 365 Canal Street, Suite 2600, New Orleans, LA 70130, spoke in support of House Bill No. 298.

Alita Caparotta, Ernest N. Morial New Orleans Exhibition Hall Authority, 900 Convention Center Boulevard, New Orleans, LA 70130, spoke in support of House Bill No. 298.

Representative Jackson offered amendments to:

1. Restore present law requirement that any lease with respect to the Convention Center Headquarters Hotel Project provide for a payment in lieu of ad valorem taxes by the lessee.
2. Add a definition for the Convention Center Headquarters Hotel Project.
3. Restore present law provisions that require a private entity involved in a joint project to pay ad valorem taxes on any improvements constructed in connection with any development, other than with respect to the Convention Center Headquarters Hotel Project.
4. Remove proposed law provisions that authorize the authority to require a lessee or sublessee to annually pay a sum in lieu of ad valorem taxes to compensate taxing authorities for services rendered to any project.
5. Remove proposed law provisions that require a lessee or sublessee to pay the full amount of ad valorem taxes levied by the Orleans Parish School Board.

Representative Jackson offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Newell, Owen, Stagni, and Young voted yea.

Representative Lyons offered a motion to report House Bill No. 298 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 298 was reported with amendments by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Newell, Owen, Stagni, and Young voted yeas.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 6 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records

House Bill No. 136 by Representative Glorioso

Representative Glorioso presented House Bill No. 136, which provides relative to certain positions in the fire and police civil service.

Chad Major, Professional Firefighters, 8011 Merle Gustafson Drive, Baton Rouge, LA, spoke in support of House Bill No. 136.

Chad Duffaut, Louisiana Fire Chiefs Association, 522 Robert Boulevard, Slidell, LA 70458, spoke in support of House Bill No. 136.

Representative Gadberry offered amendments to:

1. Change the name of the position authorized by proposed law.
2. Change the qualifications for the position authorized by proposed law.

Representative Gadberry offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Farnum, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Newell, Owen, Stagni, and Young voted yeas.

Representative Jackson offered a motion to report House Bill No. 136 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 136 was reported with amendments by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Newell, Owen, Stagni, and Young voted yeas.

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

House Bill No. 242 by Representative Chenevert

Representative Chenevert presented House Bill No. 242, which provides relative to the membership of the board of commissioners for the East Baton Rouge Parish Communications District.

Shane Spillman, Baton Rouge Fire, 8011 Merle Gustafson, Baton Rouge, LA 70807, spoke in support of House Bill No. 242.

Jim Verlander, East Baton Rouge Parish Communications District, 7145 Florida Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, spoke in support of House Bill No. 242.

Representative Marcelle offered an amendment to remove the requirement that one of the members added to the board be a qualified elector of the city of St. George.

Representative Marcelle offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Fontenot, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Newell, Owen, Stagni, and Young voted yeas.

Representative Marcelle offered a motion to report House Bill No. 242 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 242 was reported with amendments by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Cox, Fontenot, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Newell, Owen, Stagni, and Young voted yeas.

House Bill No. 278 by Representative Adams

Representative Adams presented House Bill No. 278, which provides relative to the qualifications of certain members of the fire and police civil service board.

Chad Major, Professional Firefighters, 8011 Merle Gustafson Drive, Baton Rouge, LA, spoke in support of House Bill No. 278.

Jason Turner, St. George Firefighters, 17125 Acadia Way, Prairieville, LA 70769, spoke in support of House Bill No. 278.

Adrienne Bordelon, Office of State Examiner, 7722 Office Park Boulevard, Suite 500, Baton Rouge, LA 70809, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 278.

Representative Jackson offered a motion to report House Bill No. 278 favorably. No vote was taken.

Representative Jackson withdrew his motion to report House Bill No. 278 favorably.

Representative Stagni offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 278. Without objection, action on House Bill No. 278 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Fontenot, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Stagni, and Young voted yeas.

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

House Bill No. 282 by Representative McMakin

Representative McMakin presented House Bill No. 282, which creates the Cypress Point Improvement District in East Baton Rouge Parish.

Representative Gadberry offered amendments to require any election held by the district pursuant to proposed law be held on a date that corresponds with gubernatorial or congressional primary elections.

Representative Gadberry offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Fontenot, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Owen, Stagni, Willard, and Young voted yea.

Representative Marcelle offered a motion to report House Bill No. 282 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 282 was reported with amendments by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Fontenot, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Owen, Stagni, Willard, and Young voted yea.

House Bill No. 611 by Representative Hilferty

Representative Hilferty presented House Bill No. 611, which provides relative to the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans.

Stephen Swiber, office of the governor, 900 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70801, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 611.

Representative Gadberry offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 611. Without objection, action on House Bill No. 611 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Cox, Fontenot, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Owen, Stagni, and Young voted yea.

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

House Bill No. 250 by Representative Owen

Representative Owen presented House Bill No. 250, which authorizes the governing authority of Vernon Parish to determine whether Class VI carbon dioxide injection wells may be permitted within the parish.

James Tuck, Vernon Parish Police Jury, P.O. Box 1548, Leesville, LA 71496, spoke in support of House Bill No. 250.

Patrick Riley, Louisiana Chemical Association, 301 Main Street, Suite 2040, Baton Rouge, LA 70801, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 250.

Tommy Faucheux, LMOGA, 730 North Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 250.

Representative Owen offered a motion to report House Bill No. 250 favorably, to which Representative Billings objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and the motion failed to pass by a vote of 7 yeas and 10 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Cox, Farnum, Fontenot, Owen, and Stagni voted yea. Representatives Billings, Carver, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Willard, and Young voted nay.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 18 in support, and 13 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 250.

House Bill No. 251 by Representative Owen

Representative Owen presented House Bill No. 251, which authorizes the governing authority of Beauregard Parish to determine whether Class VI carbon dioxide injection wells may be permitted within the parish.

Representative Owen provided a handout entitled "Intergovernmental Agreement to Implement the Louisiana CO2 Alliance", labeled Exhibit C, which is included in the committee records.

Russell L. Wilson, 1643 Good Hope Road, Anacoco, LA, spoke in support of House Bill No. 251.

Kim Voorhies-Goodell, 304 Woodbluff Drive, Lafayette, LA, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 251.

Representative Owen offered a motion to report House Bill No. 251 favorably, to which Representative Billings objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and the motion failed to pass by a vote of 7 yeas and 10 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Cox, Farnum, Fontenot, Owen, and Stagni voted yea. Representatives Billings, Carver, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Willard, and Young voted nay.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 15 in support, and 16 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 251.

House Bill No. 78 by Representative Carrier

Representative Carrier presented House Bill No. 78, which authorizes the governing authority of Allen Parish to determine whether Class VI carbon dioxide injection wells may be permitted within the parish.

Representative Carrier provided a handout from the Jefferson Davis Police Jury, a resolution labeled Exhibit B, which is included in the committee records.

Roland Hollins, Louisiana CO2 Alliance, P.O. Box 32, Mittie, LA 70654, spoke in support of House Bill No. 78.

Charles Kingrey, Allen Parish, no address provided, spoke in support of House Bill No. 78.

Michael Nichols, Louisiana Small Landowners Association, Pitkin, LA, spoke in support of House Bill No. 78.

Jon West, 3149 Tank Trail, Leesville, LA 71446, spoke in support of House Bill No. 78.

Representative Bayham offered a motion to report House Bill No. 78 favorably, to which Representative Billings objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and the motion failed to pass by a vote of 7 yeas and 10 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Cox, Farnum, Fontenot, Owen, and Stagni voted yea. Representatives Billings, Carver, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Willard, and Young voted nay.

Further action was taken by the committee on House Bill No. 78 at a later point the meeting. Please check for the subsequent action to complete the record of discussion and motions on House Bill No. 78.

House Bill No. 641 by Representative Romero

Representative Romero presented House Bill No. 641, which authorizes the governing authority of Jefferson Davis Parish to determine whether Class VI carbon dioxide injection wells may be permitted within the parish.

Representative Bayham offered a motion to report House Bill No. 641 favorably, to which Representative Billings objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and the motion failed to pass by a vote of 7 yeas and 10 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Cox, Farnum, Fontenot, Owen, and Stagni voted yea. Representatives Billings, Carver, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Willard, and Young voted nay.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 15 in support, and 11 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 641.

House Bill No. 78 by Representative Carrier

This is a continuation of the discussion on House Bill No. 78 from earlier in the meeting. Please check for the prior action to complete the record of discussion and motions on House Bill No. 78.

Representative Carrier presented House Bill No. 78, which authorizes the governing authority of Allen Parish to determine whether Class VI carbon dioxide injection wells may be permitted within the parish.

Representative Farnum offered a motion to report House Bill No. 78 unfavorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 78 was reported unfavorably by a vote of 17 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Billings, Carver, Cox, Farnum, Fontenot, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Owen, Stagni, Willard, and Young voted yea.

Representative Willard offered a motion to reconsider the motion to report House Bill No. 78 unfavorably. No vote was taken.

The committee recessed at 12:07 p.m. The committee reconvened at 12:11 p.m.

Representative Marcelle offered a substitute motion to involuntarily defer action on House Bill No. 78, to which Representative Owen objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and action on House Bill No. 78 was involuntarily deferred by a vote of 11 yeas and 6 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Billings, Carver, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Willard, and Young voted yea. Representatives Bayham, Cox, Farnum, Fontenot, Owen, and Stagni voted nay.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 12 in support, and 11 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 78.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Gadberry announced that House Bill No. 62 by Representative Tarver, which authorizes parish governing authorities to create commercial property assessed capital expenditure and resilience programs, would be rescheduled for May 22, 2025.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Gadberry offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 17 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Gadberry, Bayham, Billings, Carver, Cox, Farnum, Fontenot, Freiberg, Jackson, Knox, Lyons, Marcelle, Moore, Owen, Stagni, Willard, and Young voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair Foy Bryan Gadberry
House Committee on Municipal, Parochial and Cultural Affairs

Date adopted: