

House Committee on Judiciary

Minutes of Meeting
2026 Regular Session
April 29, 2026

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Robby Carter, chair of the House Committee on Judiciary, called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m. in Room 1, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Robby Carter, chair
Representative Emily Chenevert
Representative Kellee Hennessy Dickerson
Representative Kathy Edmonston, vice chair
Representative Jack "Jay" William Gallé, Jr.
Representative Kyle M. Green, Jr.
Representative Troy Jude Hebert
Representative Edmond Jordan
Representative Jeremy S. LaCombe
Representative Vanessa Caston LaFleur
Representative Mandie Landry
Representative Shane Mack
Representative Candace N. Newell
Representative Joseph A. Orgeron
Representative Charles Anthony Owen
Representative Jeffrey Fons "Jeff" Wiley
Representative Jerome Zeringue

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative Jacob Braud
Representative Lauren Ventrella

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Karen Winfrey, attorney
Paula Jones, committee administrative assistant
Rashida Keith, division director
Andrea Jerezano, committee administrative assistant

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Myrtis Jarrell, sergeant at arms
Jaubert Ambeau III, sergeant at arms
Anna Kate Jackson, clerk

III. DISCUSSION OF LEGISLATION

Representative Mack offered a motion to invoke the committee three-minute rule, to which Representative Green objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and the motion passed by a vote of 9 yeas, 3 nays, and 1 abstention. Representatives Chenevert, Dickerson, Galle, Hebert, Mack, Orgeron, Owen, Wiley, and Zeringue voted yea. Representatives Edmonston, Green, and LaFleur voted nay. Representative Robby Carter abstained.

Senate Bill No. 217 by Senator Morris

Senator Morris presented Senate Bill No. 217, which provides for the administration of courts in Orleans Parish and the number of court judges.

On behalf of Senator Morris, Representative Zeringue offered amendments to:

- (1) Reduce the judgeships of the Orleans Civil District Court from fourteen to thirteen judges.
- (2) Authorize current judges to serve the remainder of terms.
- (3) Permit the use of hearing officers to assist with domestic relations sections.

Representative Zeringue offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Robby Carter, Chenevert, Dickerson, Edmonston, Galle, Green, Hebert, LaFleur, Mack, Orgeron, Owen, Wiley, and Zeringue voted yea.

Charles Phipps, Urban League of Louisiana, 4640 S. Carrollton Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70119, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 217.

Sarah Whittington, ACLU, P.O. Box 56157, New Orleans, LA 70156, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 217.

Representative Zeringue offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 217 with amendments, to which Representative Newell objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and Senate Bill No. 217 was reported with amendments by a vote of 11 yeas, 4 nays, and 1 abstention. Representatives Chenevert, Dickerson, Edmonston, Galle, Hebert, LaCombe, Mack, Orgeron, Owen, Wiley, and

Zeringue voted yea. Representatives Green, LaFleur, Mandie Landry, and Newell voted nay. Representative Robby Carter abstained.

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

Prepared statements were received via email for Senate Bill No. 217.

Senate Bill No. 197 by Senator Morris

Senator Morris presented Senate Bill No. 197, which reduces the number of judges on the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal.

Charles Phipps, Urban League of Louisiana, 4640 S. Carrollton Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70119, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 197.

Sarah Whittington, ACLU, P.O. Box 56157, New Orleans, LA 70156, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 197.

Representative Zeringue offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 197 favorably, to which Representative Newell objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and Senate Bill No. 197 was reported favorably by a vote of 11 yeas, 4 nays, and 1 abstention. Representatives Chenevert, Dickerson, Edmonston, Galle, Hebert, LaCombe, Mack, Orgeron, Owen, Wiley, and Zeringue voted yea. Representatives Green, LaFleur, Mandie Landry, and Newell voted nay. Representative Robby Carter abstained.

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

Prepared statements were received via email for Senate Bill No. 197.

House Concurrent Resolution No. 11 by Representative Mike Johnson

Representative Mike Johnson presented House Concurrent Resolution No. 11, which expresses support for the continued operations of the Louisiana National Guard at Camp Beauregard in Pineville and commends the accomplishments of the Louisiana National Guard Youth Challenge Program.

Representative LaCombe offered a motion to report House Concurrent Resolution No. 11 favorably. Without objection, House Concurrent Resolution No. 11 was reported favorably by a vote of 16 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Robby Carter, Chenevert, Dickerson, Edmonston, Galle, Green, Hebert, LaCombe, LaFleur, Mandie Landry, Mack, Newell, Orgeron, Owen, Wiley, and Zeringue voted yea.

Senate Bill No. 85 by Senator Miller

Senator Miller presented Senate Bill No. 85, which provides for funding of certain insurance costs for retirees of the St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office.

Representative LaCombe offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 85 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 85 was reported favorably by a vote of 16 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Robby Carter, Chenevert, Dickerson, Edmonston, Galle, Green, Hebert, LaCombe, LaFleur, Mandie Landry, Mack, Newell, Orgeron, Owen, Wiley, and Zeringue voted yea.

House Bill No. 833 by Representative Boyd

Representative Boyd presented House Bill No. 833, which creates the Sexual Assault Survivor Empowerment Task Force.

On behalf of Representative Boyd, Representative Green offered an amendment to add to the task force a representative of the Louisiana State Coroner's Association, a member who is a survivor of sexual violence appointed by Sexual Trauma Awareness and Response (STAR), and a licensed clinical social worker appointed by the Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners. Representative Green offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendment. Without objection, the amendment was adopted by a vote of 16 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Robby Carter, Chenevert, Dickerson, Edmonston, Galle, Green, Hebert, LaCombe, LaFleur, Mandie Landry, Mack, Newell, Orgeron, Owen, Wiley, and Zeringue voted yea.

Representative LaCombe offered a motion to report House Bill No. 833 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 833 was reported with amendments by a vote of 16 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Robby Carter, Chenevert, Dickerson, Edmonston, Galle, Green, Hebert, LaCombe, LaFleur, Mandie Landry, Mack, Newell, Orgeron, Owen, Wiley, and Zeringue voted yea.

House Bill No. 816 by Representative Galle

Representative Galle presented House Bill No. 816, which prohibits foreign adversaries from acquiring or owning property near military installations.

Representative Galle offered a technical amendment to correct a citation of federal law. Representative Galle offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendment. Without objection, the amendment was adopted by a vote of 16 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Robby Carter, Chenevert, Dickerson, Edmonston, Galle, Green, Hebert, LaCombe, LaFleur, Mandie Landry, Mack, Newell, Orgeron, Owen, Wiley, and Zeringue voted yea.

Representative Galle offered a motion to report House Bill No. 816 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 816 was reported with amendments by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays.

Representatives Robby Carter, Chenevert, Dickerson, Edmonston, Galle, Green, Hebert, LaCombe, LaFleur, Mandie Landry, Mack, Newell, Orgeron, Owen, and Wiley voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 2 in support and 1 as a designee of an elected official. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 816.

House Bill No. 1053 by Representative Ventrella

On behalf of Representative Ventrella, Chad Brown, commissioner, Alcohol and Tobacco Control, 7979 Independence Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, presented House Bill No. 1053, which provides relative to the definitions of a "dealer" and a "retail dealer".

Representative LaCombe offered a motion to report House Bill No. 1053 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 1053 was reported favorably by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Robby Carter, Chenevert, Dickerson, Edmonston, Galle, Hebert, LaCombe, LaFleur, Mandie Landry, Mack, Newell, Orgeron, Owen, Wiley, and Zeringue 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.

House Bill No. 153 by Representative Mandie Landry

This is a continuation of the discussion on House Bill No. 153 from an earlier meeting held on March 19, 2026. Please check for the prior action to complete the record of discussion and motions on House Bill No. 153.

Representative Mandie Landry presented House Bill No. 153, which provides with respect to the collection of criminal court fines and fees.

Representative Mandie Landry offered amendments to exclude violations of traffic laws found in present law (R.S. 32.1 et seq.) or municipal ordinances from the prohibition of reporting the debt to a credit bureau or consumer reporting agency. Representative Mandie Landry offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Robby Carter, Chenevert, Dickerson, Edmonston, Galle, Hebert, LaCombe, LaFleur, Mandie Landry, Mack, Orgeron, Owen, Wiley, and Zeringue voted yea.

Representative Mandie Landry offered an amendment to delete provisions prohibiting the referral of criminal fines and fees for debt collection to the office of debt recovery. Representative Mandie Landry offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendment. Without objection, the amendment was adopted by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Robby Carter, Chenevert, Dickerson,

Edmonston, Galle, Hebert, LaCombe, LaFleur, Mandie Landry, Mack, Orgeron, Owen, Wiley, and Zeringue voted yea.

Peter Robins-Brown, Louisiana Progress, 650 North 6th Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke in support of House Bill No. 153.

Remy Starns, state public defender, office of state public defender, 301 Main Street, Suite 700, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 153.

Representative Mandie Landry offered a motion to report House Bill No. 153 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 153 was reported with amendments by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Robby Carter, Chenevert, Dickerson, Edmonston, Galle, LaCombe, LaFleur, Mandie Landry, Mack, Newell, Orgeron, Owen, Wiley, and Zeringue voted yea.

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

House Bill No. 1147 by Representative Taylor

On behalf of Representative Taylor, Representative Robby Carter offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 1147, which increases the jurisdiction of justice of the peace courts for civil claims in parishes with a population of less than twenty-six thousand persons. Without objection, action on House Bill No. 1147 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Robby Carter, Chenevert, Dickerson, Edmonston, Galle, Hebert, LaCombe, LaFleur, Mandie Landry, Mack, Newell, Orgeron, Owen, Wiley, and Zeringue voted yea.

House Bill No. 1148 by Representative Taylor

On behalf of Representative Taylor, Representative Robby Carter offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 1148, which provides relative to the judiciary commission's authority over the deliberative process of judges. Without objection, action on House Bill No. 1148 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 16 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Robby Carter, Chenevert, Dickerson, Edmonston, Galle, Hebert, Jordan, LaCombe, LaFleur, Mandie Landry, Mack, Newell, Orgeron, Owen, Wiley, and Zeringue voted yea.

House Bill No. 1190 by Representative Murray

On behalf of Representative Murray, Representative Robby Carter offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 1190, which provides with respect to the length of time coroners may retain a body. Without objection, action on House Bill No. 1190 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Robby Carter, Chenevert, Dickerson, Edmonston, Galle,

Hebert, LaCombe, LaFleur, Mandie Landry, Mack, Newell, Orgeron, Owen, Wiley, and Zeringue voted yea.

Senate Bill No. 75 by Senator Hodges

Senator Hodges presented Senate Bill No. 75, which provides for reimbursement to the state for cyber reinforcement support provided to noncompliant recipients.

Brigadier General Jason Mahfouz, director, GOHSEP, no address provided, spoke for information only on Senate Bill No. 75.

Representative LaCombe in the chair.

Jacqueline Deal, State Armor, P.O. Box 40124, Washington, D.C. 20016, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 75.

Representative Edmonston offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 75 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 75 was reported favorably by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Chenevert, Dickerson, Edmonston, Galle, Green, Hebert, Jordan, LaCombe, LaFleur, Mandie Landry, Mack, Newell, Orgeron, Owen, and Zeringue voted yea.

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

Prepared statements were received via email for Senate Bill No. 75.

Senate Bill No. 200 by Senator Hodges

Senator Hodges presented Senate Bill No. 200, which allows for expropriation of land near military bases that is owned by foreign adversaries or agents of foreign adversaries when the ownership poses a threat to public health and safety.

Michael Lucia, State Armor, 300 S. Riverside Plaza, Suite 1625, Chicago, IL 60606, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 200.

Jacqueline Deal, State Armor, P.O. Box 40124, Washington, D.C. 20015, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 200.

Chair Robby Carter in the chair.

Representative Owen offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 200 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 200 was reported favorably by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Robby

Carter, Chenevert, Edmonston, Green, Hebert, Jordan, LaCombe, LaFleur, Mandie Landry, Mack, Newell, Orgeron, Owen, and Zeringue voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 6 in support, 1 in opposition, and 1 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for Senate Bill No. 200.

House Bill No. 454 by Representative Butler

Representative Butler presented House Bill No. 454, which enacts the Gracey Claire Rushing Act which provides for the chain of custody for human remains and internal organs.

On behalf of Representative Butler, Representative Green offered amendments in the form of a substitute bill. Representative Green offered a motion to adopt the substitute bill. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Robby Carter, Chenevert, Edmonston, Green, Hebert, Jordan, LaCombe, LaFleur, Mandie Landry, Mack, Newell, Orgeron, Owen, and Zeringue voted yea.

Krystal Romero, 126 Imperial Palm Lane, Lafayette, LA 70508, spoke in support of House Bill No. 454 and provided a handout, Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records.

Lenar Whitney, 300 Wilson Avenue, Houma, LA 70300, spoke in support of House Bill No. 454.

Zeb Stearns, MD, Louisiana State Coroner's Association, 450 Moosa Boulevard, Eunice, LA 70535, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 454.

Representative Hebert offered a motion to report House Bill No. 454 by substitute. Without objection, House Bill No. 454 was reported by substitute by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Robby Carter, Chenevert, Dickerson, Edmonston, Galle, Green, Hebert, LaCombe, LaFleur, Mack, Newell, Orgeron, Owen, and Zeringue voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 60 in support, 1 for information only, and 1 designee of an elected official. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 454.

House Bill No. 278 by Representative Edmonston

Representative Edmonston presented House Bill No. 278, which provides rules for live streaming proceedings in The Family Court for East Baton Rouge Parish.

Representative Edmonston offered amendments to provide for audio recording of the proceedings and status conferences, and copies of the audio recording to the parties of the litigation for a reasonable fee.

Jeff Hughes, associate justice, Louisiana Supreme Court, P.O. Box 907, no city provided, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 278. Justice Hughes referred to a supreme court report dated December 8, 2025, in response to Senate Resolution No. 81 of the 2024 Regular Session, Exhibit B, which is included in the committee records.

Representative Edmonston offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 16 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Robby Carter, Chenevert, Dickerson, Edmonston, Galle, Green, Hebert, Jordan, LaCombe, LaFleur, Mandie Landry, Mack, Newell, Orgeron, Owen, and Zeringue voted yea.

Woody Jenkins, former representative, 910 North Foster Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, spoke in support of House Bill No. 278.

Susan Raborn, 1323 Chippenham, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, spoke in support of House Bill No. 278.

Michael Ryall, no address provided, spoke in support of House Bill No. 278.

Dong Lam Tram, 13881 Keever Avenue, St. George, LA 70817, spoke in support of House Bill No. 278.

Katherine Diamond, 2105 Kleinert Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, spoke in support of House Bill No. 278.

Lane Hudson, 2903 Tiltree Drive, Harrisburg, MS 39402, spoke in support of House Bill No. 278.

Elizabeth Fox, 234221 Cypress Cove, Springfield, LA 70462, spoke in support of House Bill No. 278.

Dr. Siobhan Trother, 130 Bodet Lane, Covington, LA 70433, spoke in support of House Bill No. 278.

Brandi Sills, 16641 Wenwood Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70817, spoke in support of House Bill No. 278.

Linnea Brailsford, no address provided, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 278.

Vincent Saffiotti, 10744 Linkwood Court, Baton Rouge, LA 70810, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 278.

Wendy Edwards, 6700 Jefferson Highway, Building 3, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 278.

Morgan Lamandre, STAR, 5311 Dijon Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 278.

Representative LaCombe in the chair.

Jeff Wittenbrink, 331 St. Ferdinand Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 278.

Scott Gaspard, P.O. Box 80496, Baton Rouge, LA, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 278.

Natasha Carter Benoit, 11616 Southfork Drive #201, Baton Rouge, LA 70816, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 278.

Erika Green, Judge, Family Court, 300 North Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 278.

Representative Edmonston 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 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Robby Carter, Chenevert, Dickerson, Edmonston, Galle, Hebert, Jordan, LaCombe, LaFleur, Mandie Landry, Mack, Newell, Orgeron, Owen, and Zeringue voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 6 in support, 9 in opposition, and 4 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 455 by Representative Carver

This is a continuation of the discussion on House Bill No. 455 from an earlier meeting held on March 19, 2026. Please check for the prior action to complete the record of discussion and motions on House Bill No. 455.

Representative Carver presented House Bill No. 455, which provides relative to the definition of "first responder".

Representative Galle offered a motion to report House Bill No. 455 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 455 was reported favorably by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Robby Carter, Chenevert, Dickerson, Edmonston, Galle, Hebert, LaCombe, Newell, Orgeron, Owen, and Zeringue 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.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 455.

Chair Robby Carter in the chair.

House Bill No. 687 by Representative Knox

Representative Knox presented House Bill No. 687, which provides relative to the location of a premises for the issuance and revocation of an alcohol permit.

Representative Jordan offered an amendment to exempt restaurants from the prohibition of having a premises with an alcohol permit within three hundred feet of a historical neighborhood. Without objection, the amendment was adopted by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Robby Carter, Chenevert, Dickerson, Edmonston, Galle, Green, Hebert, Jordan, LaCombe, Mack, Newell, Orgeron, Owen, and Zeringue voted yea.

At the request of the author, Representative Green offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 687. Without objection, action on House Bill No. 687 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Robby Carter, Chenevert, Dickerson, Edmonston, Galle, Green, Hebert, Jordan, LaCombe, Mack, Newell, Orgeron, Owen, and Zeringue voted yea.

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

House Bill No. 424 by Representative Firment

On behalf of Representative Firment, Representative Galle offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 424, which provides relative to alcoholic beverage permits. Without objection, action on House Bill No. 424 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Robby Carter, Chenevert, Dickerson, Edmonston, Galle, Green, Hebert, Jordan, LaCombe, Mack, Newell, Orgeron, Owen, and Zeringue voted yea.

House Bill No. 942 by Representative Wright

On behalf of Representative Wright, Representative Robby Carter offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 942, which provides relative to the definition of "first responder". Without objection, action on House Bill No. 942 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Robby Carter, Chenevert, Dickerson, Edmonston, Galle, Green, Hebert, Jordan, LaCombe, Mack, Newell, Orgeron, Owen, and Zeringue voted yea.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair Robby Carter
House Committee on Judiciary