

House Committee on Retirement

Minutes of Meeting
2015 Regular Session
April 30, 2015

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative J. Kevin Pearson, chairman of the House Committee on Retirement, called the meeting to order at 10:34 a.m. in Room 4, in the State Capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The secretary called the roll.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative J. Kevin Pearson, Chairman
Representative Nick Lorusso, Vice Chair
Representative Frank A. Hoffmann
Representative Paul Hollis
Representative Barry Ivey
Representative Sam Jones
Representative Gregory A. Miller
Representative Jack Montoucet
Representative Darrell P. Ourso
Representative Edward J. Price
Representative H. Eugene Reynolds
Representative Kirk Talbot

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Stephanie Little, Attorney
Katie LeLeux, Attorney
Linda Hopkins, Secretary
Shawn O'Brien, Secretary

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Cheryl Forrest, Sergeant at Arms
Linda Robillard, Sergeant at Arms
Paul T. Richmond, Actuarial Systems Manager
Office of the Legislative Auditor

III. DISCUSSION OF LEGISLATION**House Bill No. 46 by Representative Reynolds**

Representative Reynolds presented House Bill No. 46, which provides relative to benefits for minor children of certain wildlife agents in the enforcement division of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

Mr. Davis Madere, representing La. Wildlife Agenda Association, 3789 Earline Road, Paulina, LA, (985) 665-0228, spoke in support of House Bill No. 46.

Mr. Cole Garrett, legislative liaison, representing La. Wildlife and Fisheries, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, (225) 763-5577, spoke in support of House Bill No. 46.

Mr. Trey Roche, representing La. State Employees' Retirement System, 8401 United Plaza Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70809, (225) 925-7218, spoke in support of House Bill No. 46.

One person completed information witness card for House Bill No. 46.

Representative Lorusso offered a motion to report House Bill No. 46 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 46 was reported favorably by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Pearson, Lorusso, Hoffmann, Hollis, Ivey, Jones, Miller, Montoucet, Ourso, Price, Reynolds, and Talbot voted yea.

House Bill No. 48 by Representative Thibaut

Representative Thibaut presented House Bill No. 48, which provides relative to the authority of statewide retirement systems to fund cost-of-living increases with funding deposit account balances.

Ms. Nanette Menou, executive director, representing the La. Assessors, 300 Valley Creek Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, (225) 928-8886, spoke in support of House Bill No. 48.

Mr. James Laurent, Jr., president, representing the La. Assessors' Retirement Fund, 3060 Valley Creek Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70898, (225) 240-9974, spoke in support of House Bill No. 48.

Ms. Denise Akers, general counsel, representing the La. Assessors' Retirement System, 8280 YMCA Plaza Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70810, (225) 767-1003, spoke in support of House Bill No. 48.

Two persons completed witness cards in support of House Bill No. 48 but declined to speak.

Representative Lorusso offered amendments that authorize any statewide retirement system with a funding deposit account to use account funds to pay cost-of-living adjustments. Representative Lorusso offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Pearson, Lorusso, Hoffmann, Hollis, Ivey, Jones, Miller, Montoucet, Ourso, Price, and Talbot voted yea.

Representative Pearson offered a motion to report House Bill No. 48 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 48 was reported with amendments by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Pearson, Lorusso, Hoffmann, Hollis, Ivey, Jones, Miller, Montoucet, Ourso, Price, and Talbot voted yea.

House Bill No. 47 by Representative St. Germain

Representative St. Germain presented House Bill No. 47, which prohibits certain post-divorce earnable compensation in the Firefighters' Retirement System from being included in a former spouse's portion of community property.

Mr. Chad Major, representing the Professional Firefighters, 5615 Corporate Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, (225) 572-8483, spoke in support of House Bill No. 47.

Mr. Steven Stockstill, representing Firefighters' Retirement System, 3100 Brentwood Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 925-4060, spoke in support of House Bill No. 47.

Eight persons completed witness cards in favor of House Bill No. 47 but declined to speak.

Representative Ourso offered technical amendments to House Bill 47. Representative Ourso offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Pearson, Lorusso, Hoffmann, Hollis, Ivey, Jones, Miller, Montoucet, Ourso, Price, and Talbot voted yea.

Representative Ourso offered a motion to report House Bill No. 47 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 47 was reported with amendments by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Pearson, Lorusso, Hoffmann, Hollis, Ivey, Jones, Miller, Montoucet, Ourso, Price, and Talbot voted yea.

House Bill No. 9 by Representative Hill

Representative Hill presented House Bill No. 9, which provides relative to enrollment of judges and employees of the Local Tax Division of the Board of Tax Appeals in the Municipal Employees' Retirement System.

Mr. Blake Cooper, executive director, representing Alexandria Regional Port, 600 Port Road, Alexandria, LA 71303, (318) 229-7627, spoke in favor of House Bill No. 9.

Mr. Cade Cole, representing La. State Board of Tax Appeals, 627 N. Fourth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 219-3145, spoke in support of House Bill No. 9.

One person completed witness card in support of House Bill No. 9 but declined to speak.

Representative Montoucet offered amendments that authorize the Alexandria Regional Port to participate in MERS. Representative Montoucet offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Pearson, Lorusso, Hoffmann, Hollis, Ivey, Jones, Miller, Montoucet, Ourso, Price, and Talbot voted yea.

Representative Montoucet offered a motion to report House Bill No. 9 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 9 was reported with amendments by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Pearson, Lorusso, Hoffmann, Hollis, Ivey, Jones, Miller, Montoucet, Ourso, Price, and Talbot voted yea.

House Bill No. 11 by Representative Price

Representative Price presented House Bill No. 11, which provides exceptions, in certain circumstances, to required employer payment of Louisiana School Employees' Retirement System unfunded accrued liability.

Mr. Jim Melohn, representing St. Charles Parish School Board, 13855 River Road, Luling, LA 70070, (504) 416-6198, spoke in support of House Bill No. 11.

Mr. Charles Bujol, executive director, La. School Employees' Retirement System, 8660 United Plaza Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70809, (225) 925-6484, spoke in support of House Bill No. 11.

One person completed witness card in support of House Bill No. 11 but declined to speak.

One person completed a witness card for information only, for House Bill No. 11.

Representative Montoucet offered a motion to defer voluntary and study House Bill No. 11. Without objection, House Bill No. 11 defer voluntary and study by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays.

Representatives Pearson, Hoffmann, Hollis, Ivey, Jones, Miller, Montoucet, Ourso, Price, and Talbot voted yea.

House Bill No. 42 by Representative Jones

Representative Jones presented House Bill No. 42, which authorizes payments funded by state retirement system experience accounts to certain retirees and beneficiaries of such systems.

Mr. Frank Jobert, executive director, Retired State Employees' Association, 9412 Common Street, Suite 7, Baton Rouge, LA 70809, (225) 930-0961, spoke in support of House Bill No. 42.

Ms. Carol Davis, representing the LAE Retired, 992 Aragon Road, Montegut, LA, (985) 594-9749, spoke in support of House Bill No. 42.

Ms. Patricia Ann Sonnier, representing the Lafayette Parish Retired Teachers, 815 West Butcher Switch, Lafayette, LA 70507, (337) 896-3794, spoke in support of House Bill No. 42.

Mr. Paul Wesley, 638 Jean Street, Denham Springs, LA 70726, (225) 262-9325, spoke in support of House Bill No. 42.

Rep. Joe Harrison, representing District 51, P. O. Box 1809, Gray, LA 70359, (800) 935-2018, spoke in support of House Bill No. 42.

Rep. Jon Bell Edwards, representing District 72, P. O. Box 160, Amite, LA 70422, (985) 748-2245, spoke in support of House Bill No. 42.

Rep. Dorothy Sue Hill, representing District 32, 529 Tramel Road, Dry Creek, LA 70637, (800) 259-2118, spoke in support of House Bill No. 42.

Ms. Maureen Westgard, director, Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana, 8401 United Plaza Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 925-6454, spoke in support of House Bill No. 42.

Ms. Cindy Rougeou, executive director, La. State Employees' Retirement System, 8401 United Plaza, Baton Rouge, La 70809, (225) 922-0604, spoke in support of House Bill No. 42.

Mr. Charles Bujol, executive director, La. School Employees' Retirement System, 8660 United Plaza Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70809, spoke in support of House Bill No. 42.

Mr. Irwin Felts, director, La. State Police Retirement System, 9224 Jefferson, Baton Rouge, LA 70809, (225) 295-8400, spoke in support of House Bill No. 42.

Ninety persons completed witness cards in support of House Bill No. 42.

Mr. Ben Huxen, commissioner of administration, 1201 N. 3rd Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 342-7000, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 42.

Two persons completed witness cards in opposition to House Bill No. 42.

Five persons completed witness cards, for information only, for House Bill No. 42.

Representative Lorusso offered amendments that authorize a beneficiary of a disability retiree to combine the time the beneficiary has received a benefit with the time the deceased received a benefit in order to qualify for the permanent benefit adjustment. Representative Lorusso offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Lorusso, Hoffmann, Hollis, Ivey, Jones, Miller, Montoucet, Ourso, Price, and Talbot voted yea.

Representative Jones offered a motion to report House Bill No. 42 with amendments, to which Representative Pearson objected. A roll call vote was taken and by a vote of 6 yeas and 6 nays, the motion failed to pass. Representatives Hoffmann, Jones, Montoucet, Price, Reynolds, and Talbot voted yea. Representatives Pearson, Lorusso, Hollis, Ivey, Miller, and Ourso voted nay.

Representative Montoucet offered a motion to report House Bill No. 42 unfavorably, to which Representative Pearson objected. A roll call vote was taken and by a vote of 5 yeas and 7 nays, the motion failed to pass. Representatives Hoffmann, Jones, Montoucet, Price, and Reynolds voted yea. Representatives Pearson, Lorusso, Hollis, Ivey, Miller, Ourso, and Talbot voted nay.

House Bill No. 43 by Representative LeBas

Representative LeBas presented House Bill No. 43, which increases the salary cap in the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana retire-rehire law for retirees employed as substitute classroom teachers.

Mr. Michael J. Lombas, director of personnel, representing Evangeline Parish, 1123 Te Mamou Road, Ville Platte, LA 70586, (337) 363-0442, spoke in support of House Bill No. 43.

Twelve persons completed witness cards in support of House Bill No. 43 but declined to speak.

One person completed witness card for information only for House Bill No. 43.

One person completed witness card in opposition to House Bill No. 43 but declined to speak.

Representative Reynolds offered a motion to report House Bill No. 43 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 43 was reported favorably by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Pearson, Lorusso, Hoffmann, Hollis, Ivey, Jones, Miller, Montoucet, Ourso, Reynolds, and Talbot voted yea.

House Bill No. 39 by Representative Tim Burns

Representative Tim Burns presented House Bill No. 39, which provides relative to retirement contributions for employees of the city of Mandeville to the Municipal Employees' Retirement System.

Mr. Donald Villen, mayor of Mandeville City, 3101 East Causeway Approach, Mandeville, LA 70448, (985) 626-70448, spoke in support of House Bill No. 39.

Representative Jones offered a motion to report House Bill No. 39 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 39 was reported favorably by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Pearson, Lorusso, Hoffmann, Hollis, Ivey, Jones, Miller, Montoucet, Ourso, Price, Reynolds, and Talbot voted yea.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Lorusso offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion to adjourn passed by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Pearson, Lorusso, Hoffmann, Hollis, Ivey, Jones, Miller, Montoucet, Ourso, Price, Reynolds, and Talbot voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Kevin Pearson, chairman
House Committee on Retirement

The committee has acknowledged on March 17, 2016, that these minutes were prepared in accordance with the rules of the House of Representatives.