

House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment

Minutes of Meeting
2017 Regular Session
May 2, 2017

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Stuart J. Bishop, chairman of the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment, called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m. in Room 4, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Stuart J. Bishop, chairman
Representative Robert E. Billiot
Representative Terry R. Brown
Representative Patrick Connick
Representative Jean-Paul P. Coussan
Representative Phillip R. DeVillier
Representative Jerry Gisclair
Representative John E. Guinn
Representative Christopher J. Leopold, vice chairman
Representative Rodney Lyons
Representative Tanner D. Magee
Representative Jack G. McFarland
Representative Blake Miguez
Representative Malinda B. White
Representative H. Eugene Reynolds
Representative Jerome "Zee" Zeringue

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative James K. Armes, III
Representative Franklin J. Foil
Representative James H. "Jim" Morris

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Su King, legislative analyst
Tyler S. McCloud, attorney
Karen Stephens, secretary

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Zach Lester, clerk
Myrtis Jarrell, sergeant at arms

III. DISCUSSION OF LEGISLATION

House Bill No. 156 by Representative Dwight

Representative Dwight presented House Bill No. 156, which provides for the gear authorized for oyster harvest on Calcasieu Lake and Sabine Lake.

Representative Bishop offered amendments to limit the tonging in both Calcasieu Lake and Sabine Lake to hand tonging. Representative Bishop offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Bishop, Billiot, Terry Brown, Connick, Coussan, DeVillier, Gisclair, Guinn, Lyons, Magee, McFarland, Miguez, White, Reynolds, and Zeringue voted yea.

Ms. Karen Gautreau, The Nature Conservancy, P.O. Box 4125, Baton Rouge, LA 70821, (225) 250-6782, spoke in support of House Bill No. 156.

Mr. Michael "Erik" Rue, Calcasieu Charter Service, 210 Bank Street, Lake Charles, LA 70607, (337) 598-4700, spoke in support of House Bill No. 156.

Mr. David Cresson, Coastal Conservation Association, 12241 Industriplex Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70809, spoke in support of House Bill No. 156.

Mr. Chris Bruno, Yellow Mouth Charters, 136 Vincent Road, Lake Charles, LA 70607, (337) 905-5271, spoke in support of House Bill No. 156.

Mr. Raymond Little, Coastal Conservation Association, 3100 Lake Street, Lake Charles, LA 70601, (337) 288-5685, spoke in support of House Bill No. 156.

Mr. Adley Dyson, Oyster Task Force, Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, 170 Adam Roux Road, Cameron, LA 70631, (337) 775-7228, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 156.

Mr. Chris Mallory, no address provided, (305) 290-9880, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 156.

Ms. Rebecca Triche, Louisiana Wildlife Federation, 337 S. Acadian Thruway, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, (225) 344-6707, spoke in support of House Bill No. 156.

Representative Guinn offered a motion to report House Bill No. 156 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 156 was reported with amendments by a vote of 16 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Bishop, Billiot, Terry Brown, Connick, Coussan, DeVillier, Gisclair, Guinn, Leopold, Lyons, Magee, McFarland, Miguez, White, Reynolds, and Zeringue voted yea.

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

Representative Leopold in the chair.

House Bill No. 474 by Representative Garofalo

Representative Garofalo presented House Bill No. 474, which authorizes the issuance of an alternative oyster culture permit to a person holding an oyster lease on a privately-owned water bottom.

Representative Zeringue offered amendments to:

1. Delete references to the suitability mapping. Provide, rather, that the department determine areas that are not suitable for alternative oyster culture due to conflicts with other uses of the state water bottom and use any updated or revised information and coastal use permit requirements, along with the coastal master plan and annual plan in the issuance of AOC permits.
2. Delete the provision that would have required that if there was visible farming effort, the holder of a valid coastal use permit or mariculture permit issued for alternative oyster culture on water bottoms on private land has a right of first refusal to apply for a lease or a permit should a determination be made that the state owns the water bottom subject to the coastal use permit or mariculture permit.

Representative Zeringue offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Billiot, Terry Brown, Connick, Coussan, DeVillier, Gisclair, Leopold, Lyons, Magee, McFarland, Miguez, White, Reynolds, and Zeringue voted yea.

Representative Gisclair offered a motion to report House Bill No. 474 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 474 was reported with amendments by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays.

Representatives Billiot, Terry Brown, Connick, Coussan, DeVillier, Gisclair, Leopold, Lyons, Magee, McFarland, Miguez, White, Reynolds, and Zeringue voted yea.

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

Representative Bishop in the chair.

House Bill No. 608 by Representative White

Representative White presented House Bill No. 608, which allows the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to manage, regulate, conserve flora in addition to fauna.

Mr. Cole Garrett, Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 608.

Ms. Amity Bass, Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, (225) 765-2975, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 608.

Representative Bishop offered a motion to report House Bill No. 608 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 608 was reported favorably by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Bishop, Billiot, Terry Brown, Connick, Coussan, DeVillier, Gisclair, Guinn, Leopold, Lyons, McFarland, Miguez, White, Reynolds, and Zeringue 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. 475 by Representative Gisclair

Representative Gisclair presented House Bill No. 475, which provides that the removal of derelict crab traps coincide with the closure of crab season.

Mr. John Lopez, Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation, 2645 Lakeshore Drive, New Orleans, LA 70122, (504) 836-2215, provided a PowerPoint presentation, Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records.

Representative Guinn offered a motion to report House Bill No. 475 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 475 was reported favorably by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Bishop, Billiot, Terry Brown, Connick, Coussan, DeVillier, Gisclair, Guinn, Lyons, Magee, Miguez, White, and Reynolds voted yea.

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

Representative Magee in the chair.

House Concurrent Resolution No. 9 by Representative Bishop

Representative Bishop presented House Concurrent Resolution No. 9, which requests the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to examine the issues involved in a program to issue a safe boater decal.

Representative Bishop offered amendments to change the certification from vessel operators to vessel. Representative Bishop offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Bishop, Billiot, Terry Brown, Connick, Coussan, DeVillier, Gisclair, Leopold, Lyons, Magee, Miguez, White, Reynolds, and Zeringue voted yea.

Representative White 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 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Bishop, Billiot, Terry Brown, Connick, Coussan, DeVillier, Gisclair, Leopold, Lyons, Magee, Miguez, White, Reynolds, and Zeringue voted yea.

House Bill No. 515 by Representative Bishop

Representative Bishop presented House Bill No. 515, which requires approval for the use of a toxicant intended to control or eradicate outlaw quadrupeds. After a brief explanation, he announced his intention to voluntarily defer action on the bill. No vote was taken on House Bill No. 515.

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

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

Approval of 2016 meeting minutes dated March 1

The minutes from the 2016 First Extraordinary Session dated March 1 were presented to the committee for approval. Representative Magee offered a motion to approve the minutes. Without objection, the minutes were approved by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Bishop, Billiot, Terry Brown, Connick, Coussan, DeVillier, Gisclair, Leopold, Lyons, Magee, Miguez, White, Reynolds, and Zeringue voted yea.

Representative Bishop in the chair.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Bruno Prager, Best of Louisiana Outdoors, 3501 Post Oak Avenue, New Orleans, LA, (504) 512-1946, explained the purpose and content of his publication and provided a handout, Exhibit B, which is included in the committee records.

Representative Bishop announced that today is Oil and Gas Industry Day at the state capitol and recognized those representatives present from Shell Oil, ExxonMobil, British Petroleum, the Port of Morgan City, the Greater Lafourche Port Commission, the South Central Industrial Association, the New Iberia delegation, Nicholls State University, the Gulf Economic Survival Team, and South Louisiana Community College.

Representative Bishop announced that the Coastal Day briefing is moved to Room 6 at 1:00 p.m.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:38 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Stuart J. Bishop
House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment

Date approved: