

House Committee on Appropriations

Minutes of Meeting
2019 Regular Session
April 3, 2019

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Cameron Henry, Chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations, called the meeting to order at 9:16 a.m. in Room 5, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The secretary called the roll.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Cameron Henry, Chairman
Representative Mark Abraham
Representative Beryl A. Amedée
Representative Tony Bacala
Representative Lawrence A. "Larry" Bagley
Representative John A. Berthelot
Representative Robert E. Billiot
Representative Gary M. Carter, Jr.
Representative Charles R. Chaney
Representative Rick Edmonds
Representative Julie Emerson
Representative Reid Falconer
Representative Franklin J. Foil, Vice Chairman
Representative Lance Harris
Representative Valarie Hodges
Representative Walt Leger, III
Representative Jack G. McFarland
Representative Blake Miguez
Representative Dustin Miller
Representative Scott M. Simon
Representative Patricia Haynes Smith
Representative Jerome "Zee" Zeringue

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative James K. Armes, III
Representative Steve E. Pylant

Representative Jerome Richard
Representative Katrina R. Jackson, Interim Member
Representative Julie Stokes, Interim Member

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ms. Alexis Normand, Attorney
Ms. Jane Schoen, Secretary
Ms. Adrienne Wood, Attorney

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Ms. Faye Talbot, Sergeant at Arms

III. DISCUSSION

House Bill No. 105 by Representative Henry

The following agencies contained in House Bill No. 105 were presented and discussed:

Department of Insurance

Ms. Alexis Normand, Attorney, House Fiscal Division (HFD), 900 North Third Street, 11th Floor, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 342-6292, presented an overview and discussed the department's FY19-20 budget.

Mr. Lance Herrin, Assistant Commissioner, Department of Insurance, 1702 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, discussed the department's funded vacancies and their efforts to increase personnel to combat insurance fraud with Representative Amedée.

Mr. Herrin and Commissioner Jim Donelon, Department of Insurance, 1702 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 342-7275, discussed the department's maintenance costs with Representative Amedée.

Commissioner Donelon discussed concerns with the cost of national flood insurance and the National Flood Insurance Program with Representative Zeringue. The commissioner also discussed the state's insurance coverage rate trends with Representative Smith.

Commissioner Donelon discussed the decrease in insurance rate reversion to the state with Representative Henry. The commissioner also discussed the department's efforts to provide more auto insurance coverage options to lower auto insurance rates with Representative McFarland.

Commissioner Donelon discussed Louisiana's statute of limitations on litigation claims in automobile accidents compared to other states with Representative Leger.

Representative McFarland in the chair.

Office of the Lieutenant Governor & Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism

Ms. Christina Bastien Perrault, Budget Analyst, HFD, 900 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-2412, presented an overview and discussed the department's FY19-20 budget.

Lt. Governor William "Billy" Nungesser, 1051 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-7009, discussed the department's efforts to grow state tourism, deferred maintenance needs in state parks, the department's efforts to effectively manage state museums and the types of services and programs provided by the department with the committee.

Lt. Governor Nungesser discussed the department's efforts to increase state park revenues, cost savings measures, and proposals to privatize certain state parks with Representative Miguez. Lt. Governor Nungesser and Ms. Nancy Watkins, Undersecretary, Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, 1051 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, (225) 342-8201, also discussed the corrective actions taken in response to audit findings with Representative Miguez.

Lt. Governor Nungesser discussed the department's program to employ adults with special needs within state parks with Representative Foil and also discussed efforts to increase state museum revenues with Representative Carter.

Representative Foil in the chair.

Mr. H. Brandon Burnis, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, 1051 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, (225) 342-8111, discussed the department's use of statutory dedications with Representative Abraham.

Lt. Governor Nungesser discussed the Seafood Promotion Board, inspections of imported seafood, and incentives for restaurants to serve Louisiana seafood with Representatives Abraham and Amedée and discussed the excise tax on imported seafood Representative Abraham.

Department of Treasury

Mr. Chris Henry, Budget Analyst, HFD, 900 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-1394, presented an overview and discussed the department's FY19-20 budget.

Representative Henry in the chair.

Mr. Henry, Treasurer John Schroder, and Ms. Laura Lapeze, Chief Financial Officer, Department of Treasury, 900 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-0051, discussed increases in the department's operating and professional services budget category with Representative Amedée.

Ms. Lapeze and Ms. Lela Folse, Director of the State Bond Commission, 900 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 219-1134, discussed I-49 bond payments with Representative Smith.

Department of Economic Development

Mr. Henry presented an overview and discussed the department's FY19-20 budget. Mr. Henry and Secretary Don Pierson, Department of Economic Development, P.O. Box 94185, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 342-5388, also discussed the department's excess budget authority, the decline in self-generated revenue, and other expenditure trends with Representative Bacala.

Ms. Anne Villa, Undersecretary, Department of Economic Development, P.O. Box 94185, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 342-5395, discussed the department's salary expenses versus personnel and the department's means of financing swaps with Representative Henry.

Ms. Mandi Mitchell, Assistant Secretary, Department of Economic Development, P.O. Box 94185, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 342-5395, discussed the procedural changes within the Industrial Tax Exemption Program with Representative Henry.

Secretary Pierson discussed the department's efforts for economic development in rural areas of the state with Representative McFarland.

Representative Miguez in the chair.

Department of Environmental Quality

Ms. Perrault presented an overview and discussed the FY19-20 budget for the department.

Representative Henry in the chair.

Ms. Karen Andrews, Undersecretary, and Dr. Chuck Car Brown, Secretary, Department of Environmental Quality, P.O. Box 4301, Baton Rouge, LA 70821, (225) 219-3950, discussed the department's excess budget authority and funds carried forward from FY18-19 with Representative Bacala.

Dr. Brown discussed the Waste Tire Program with Representatives Carter, Edmonds, and McFarland.

Ms. Andrews and Dr. Brown discussed payments made to the Department of Justice for investigations with Representative Carter.

Dr. Brown discussed erosion control projects with Representative Edmonds and discussed the Air Monitoring Program with Representative Henry.

Workforce Commission

Ms. Perrault presented an overview and discussed the department's FY19-20 budget.

Ms. Ava Dejoie, Secretary, Louisiana Workforce Commission, 1001 North 23rd Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-7960, discussed statistics on those employed in minimum wage jobs with Representatives Bacala and Falconer. Ms. Dejoie also provided a handout, Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records.

Ms. Dejoie discussed updates to the Louisiana Rehabilitation Services and the agency's excess budget authority with Representative Bacala. Ms. Dejoie also discussed the agency's use of federal passthrough funds and the employee turnover rate with Representative Edmonds.

Ms. Melissa Bayham, Director, Louisiana Rehabilitation Services, P.O. Box 91297, Baton Rouge, LA 70821, (225) 921-1318, discussed services provided to Louisiana's deaf community with Representative Smith.

Ms. Dejoie discussed Louisiana's job market, the gap between qualified workers and available jobs, and job training opportunities with Representative Abraham.

Judge Sheral Kellar, Assistant Secretary, Louisiana Workers' Compensation Administration, P.O. Box 94040, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 342-7561, and Ms. Dejoie discussed workers' compensation for undocumented residents who are employed in Louisiana with Representatives Abraham and Carter.

Public Service Commission

Ms. Perrault presented an overview and discussed the commission's FY19-20 budget.

Mr. Brandon Frey, Secretary, Louisiana Public Service Commission, P.O. Box 91154, Baton Rouge, LA 70821, (225) 342-5163, discussed the Do Not Call Program and how to handle spoof calls from scammers with Representatives Amedée and Berthelot.

IV. BUSINESS

There was no other business.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Berthelot offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 21 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Henry, Abraham, Amedée, Bacala, Bagley, Berthelot, Billiot, Gary Carter, Chaney, Emerson, Falconer, Foil, Lance Harris, Hodges, Leger, McFarland, Miguez, Dustin Miller, Simon, Smith, and Zeringue voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Cameron Henry
House Committee on Appropriations