

**House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment
and
Senate Committee on Natural Resources**

Minutes of Joint Meeting
2020 - 2021 Interim
February 10, 2021

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Jean-Paul P. Coussan, chairman of the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment, called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m. in the House Chamber, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

HOUSE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Jean-Paul P. Coussan, chairman
Representative R. Dewith Carrier
Representative Mack Cormier
Representative Phillip DeVillier
Representative Brett F. Geymann
Representative Timothy P. Kerner
Representative Mandie Landry
Representative Buddy Mincey, Jr.
Representative Joseph A. Orgeron
Representative Neil Riser
Representative Troy D. Romero
Representative Rodney Schamerhorn
Representative William "Bill" Wheat, Jr.

HOUSE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative Ryan Joseph Bourriaque,
vice chairman
Representative Rhonda Gaye Butler

SENATE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Bob Hensgens, chairman
Senator R. L. Bret Allain, II
Senator Joseph Bouie, Jr.
Senator Patrick Connick
Senator Michael "Big Mike" Fesi, vice-chairman
Senator Sharon Hewitt
Senator Eddie J. Lambert

SENATE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Senator Rick Ward

HOUSE STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Tyler Bosworth, legislative analyst
Robin Stalder, attorney
Trinicia Bryant, committee administrative assistant

SENATE STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Tyler S. McCloud, attorney
Babette Ellis, committee clerk

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Faye Talbot, House sergeant at arms
Louis Carral, Senate sergeant at arms
Anthony Lumbard, Senate sergeant at arms
Fate Mitchell, Senate sergeant at arms

III. DISCUSSION

Representative Coussan opened the meeting by welcoming members of the public and the federal delegation to the house chamber and also read a statement from Speaker Schexnayder with regard to the halting of oil and gas leasing and exploration.

Louisiana Congressional Delegation

Congressman Bill Cassidy, 520 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510, (202) 224-5824, spoke via pre-recorded video for information only. Congressman Cassidy spoke about the actions of President Biden and the impacts on Louisiana residents and economy.

Congressman Garret Graves, 6th District of Louisiana, 2351 Energy Drive, Suite 1200, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808, (225) 442-1731, spoke for information only. He also presented a PowerPoint entitled "Rep. Garret Graves, Representing Louisiana 6th District", Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records. Congressman Graves provided information regarding the Biden Administration's goals on climate and energy, executive actions taken so far, the current state of United States energy, and the potential outcomes of the Biden Administration Energy Plan. Representative Mincey and Congressman Graves discussed the Morganza/Gulf project and federal expenditures.

Senator Hewitt and Congressman Graves discussed legislation regarding seismic and leasing activities in the gulf, 20 year forecasts of supply and demand for energy, renewable energy, and energy demands of the future.

Congressman Clay Higgins, 3rd District of Louisiana, 600 Jefferson Street, Suite 808, Lafayette, Louisiana 70501, (337) 703-6105, spoke for information only. Congressman Higgins spoke about

the importance of the oil and gas industry in Louisiana as it accounts for more than 70 billion of the state gross domestic product (GDP) and supports nearly a quarter of a million Louisiana jobs that supply families with economic stability and security. Congressman Higgins also expressed concern with the onslaught of unknown federal regulations and the impacts of such regulations.

Representative DeVillier and Congressman Higgins discussed constituent concerns regarding loss of offshore jobs and drilling of orphan wells.

State Executive Branch Agencies

Thomas Harris, Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, no address provided, (225) 342-2710, spoke for information only. Mr. Harris stated Governor Edwards has been actively engaged in pushing back on the leasing moratorium and has been making the case that cutting domestic production will not achieve the results the Biden Administration assumes and that better tools that will not have a negative impact on the economy should be considered. Mr. Harris also stated that Governor Edwards has had several calls with members of congress and the Biden Administration to express his concerns with the executive order.

Representative Landry and Mr. Harris discussed language in the executive order pertaining to new leases, pauses, review and consideration, and the impacts a pause will have.

Representative DeVillier and Mr. Harris discussed new leases in the state and suggestions regarding legislation that will assist with bringing jobs back to Louisiana.

Matthew Block, no witness card provided, spoke for information only. Mr. Block spoke on behalf the governor's office and informed the committee that Governor Edwards is advocating for Louisiana and the economy. Mr. Block expressed the importance of working collaboratively with the Biden Administration as well as environmental groups.

Chip Kline, Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA), 1051 North 3rd Street, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70820, (225) 342-7669, spoke for information only. Mr. Kline stated the state of Louisiana has the largest climate adaptation plan in the entire country and is in large part funded with revenues that are derived from the most highly regulated, the cleanest, and the least carbon intensive oil and gas produced anywhere in the world. He also stated that since 2007 the CPRA has secured over 20 billion dollars that has implemented projects in all 20 coastal parishes. Mr. Kline stated success and accomplishments in the coastal programs are the result of productive working relationships with stakeholders of many stripes including local governments, levee districts, land owners, the private sector, environmental organizations, and oil and gas companies. He concluded by stating over the last few years policies from the federal government have been inconsistent and have called into question the funding of environmental and recreational projects across the country.

Representative Orgeron asked what percentage of CPRA annual budget is derived from oil and gas, to which Mr. Kline responded the only recurring sources of revenue from the state and federal government come from oil and gas revenues and that when only taking Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA) funds into consideration those percentages for fiscal years 2019-2020, 2018-2019, and 2017-2018 were 27.83%, 39%, and 59%, respectively. He also stated if BP funds are taken into account those percentages rise to approximately 80%.

Liz Murril, Louisiana Office of the Attorney General, 1885 North 3rd Street, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808, (225) 362-6766, spoke for information only. She presented a PowerPoint entitled "The War on the Fossil Fuel Industry and Louisiana Impacts: President Biden's Executive Orders, Agency Actions, and the Impact on Louisiana", Exhibit B, which is included in the committee records. Ms. Murril provided an overview of the executive order, immediate impacts, and the social costs.

Bill Stiles, Louisiana Office of the Attorney General, 1885 North 3rd Street, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808, (225) 362-6766, spoke for information only. Mr. Stiles discussed the social cost impacts of the executive order and how costs may potentially double for coastal parish projects, housing developments, permits, infrastructure, in retail stores, and taxes on gasoline.

Local Government Representatives

Archie Chaisson, Lafourche Parish president, 402 Green Street, Thibodaux, Louisiana (985) 446-8427, spoke for information only. Mr. Chaisson expressed the importance of oil and gas and the role Lafourche Parish plays in the production of oil and gas to the nation and the revenues to the parish.

Gordon Dove, Terrebonne Parish president, Main Street, (985) 873-6401, spoke for information only. Mr. Dove stated Terrebonne Parish is 60% dependent on oil and gas revenues with most coming from Port Fourchon and offshore. He also discussed levees, flood gates, and the importance of changing the policies imposed by the Biden Administration's executive order.

Josh Guillory, Lafayette City and Parish, 705 West University Avenue, Lafayette, Louisiana 70503, (337) 291-8300, spoke for information only. Mr. Guillory stated that President Biden's moratorium is not a stand alone action, rather it is a part of a wide ranging executive order on the federal response to what is referred to as the climate crisis. He also stated the order appeared to be directly aimed at energy exploration. Mr. Guillory concluded by stating the importance of crafting a more comprehensive response to the implications of the administration's attacks on the vital oil and gas industry and the impacts on the country, the state, and Lafayette Parish.

Industry Representatives

Tyler Gray, Louisiana Mid-Continent Oil and Gas Association (LMOGA), 730 North Boulevard, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802, (225) 387-3205, spoke for information only. Mr. Gray provided

an overview of LMOGA and also discussed the impacts of the moratorium and what is at stake for the Gulf Coast region.

Lori LeBlanc, Gulf Economic Survival Team, 730 North Boulevard, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70807, (225) 387-3205, spoke for information only. Ms. LeBlanc provided an overview of Gulf Economic Survival Team and the effects of the moratorium on the offshore industry and workers.

Chett Chaisson, Greater Lafourche Port Commission/Port Fourchon, 16829 East Main Street, Cut Off, Louisiana 70345, (985) 632-6701, spoke for information only. Mr. Chaisson spoke on behalf of his community and provided an overview of the Port Commission.

Paul Danos, South Central Industrial Alliance (SCIA), 3878 West Main Street, Gray, Louisiana 70360, (985) 856-4955, spoke for information only.

Ben Malbrough, Bayou Industrial Group, 1016 St. Mary Street, Thibodaux, Louisiana 70301, (985) 447-7155, spoke for information only.

Mike Moncla, Louisiana Oil and Gas Association (LOGA), 1831 Lake Ridge Drive, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. (225) 388-9525, spoke for information only.

Lauren Chauvin, Louisiana Association of Business and Industry (LABI), 501 Main Street, Baton Rouge, Louisiana (337) 501-8620, spoke for information only.

Bryan Hanks, Beta Land Services/LABI, 114 Kings Walk, Lafayette, Louisiana 70503, (337) 371-3601, spoke for information only.

David Dismukes, Louisiana State University Center for Energy Studies, no address provided, (225) 405-4343, spoke for information only.

Kevin Hayes, Louisiana Landowners Association, 412 North 4th Street, Suite 328, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802, (225) 268-2725, spoke for information only.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Jean-Paul P. Coussan
Joint Committee on Natural Resources

Date adopted: