

Judicial Structure Task Force
(HR 30 2022 R.S.)
Minutes of Meeting
October 20, 2022

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Jerome Zeringue, chairman of the Judicial Structure Task Force, called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m. in Room 1, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

LEGISLATIVE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Jerome "Zee" Zeringue, chairman
Senator James "Jimmy" Harris
Representative Jason M. Hughes
Representative Nicholas Muscarello, Jr.
Representative Debbie Villio

LEGISLATIVE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative Mandie Landry
Representative Tanner D. Magee
Representative Thomas A. Pressly, IV

NON-LEGISLATIVE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Judge Marilyn Castle
Judge Lee Faulkner
Judge Douglas J. Saloom
Judge Mitchell R. Theriot
Chief Justice John Weimer

INVITED STAKEHOLDERS PRESENT:

Judge Tiffany Chase
Judge Guy Holdridge

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Amanda Trapp, legislative analyst
Kerry Lentini, judicial council
Diane Merritt, committee administrative assistant

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Michael McCain, clerk
Myrtis Jarrell, sergeant at arms

III. DISCUSSION

Representative Zeringue, chairman of the Judicial Structure Task Force, asked staff to give an update on the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) contract.

Kerry K. Lentini, contractor, representing the Louisiana Supreme Court, 300 Southern Rd., River Ridge, LA 70123, (504) 400-4499, provided an update on the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) contract and addressed questions from the task force members.

Representative Zeringue explained that the legislature would be funding the study and would therefore be responsible for the three advisory committees. The meetings of the advisory committees would be public so that any interested party who was not appointed as a member would have the opportunity to participate and provide input.

Representative Muscarello offered a motion to authorize Chairman Zeringue to work with the judiciary to put together the advisory committees. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 8 yeas and 0 nays. Representative Zeringue, Judge Castle, Judge Faulkner, Representative Muscarello, Judge Saloom, Judge Theriot, Representative Villio, and Chief Justice Weimer voted yea.

Chief Judge Vanessa Whipple, Conference of Court of Appeal Judges, 7910 Main St., Suite 410, Houma, LA 70360, (985) 876-4034, testified for information only and provided information on behalf of the Louisiana Conference of Court of Appeal Judges, Exhibit A, which is included in the Judicial Structure Task Force records. Chief Judge Whipple addressed questions from the task force members.

Chief Judge Susan M. Chehardy, Conference of Court of Appeal Judges, 101 Derbigny St., Gretna, LA 70054, (504) 376-1400, testified for information only and provided information in reference to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeal. Chief Judge Chehardy addressed questions from the task force members.

Chief Judge Terri Love, Conference of Court of Appeal Judges, 400 Royal St., New Orleans, LA 70130, (504) 412-6001, testified for information only and provided information in reference to the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal. Chief Judge Love addressed questions from the task force members.

Chief Judge Sylvia Cooks, Conference of Court of Appeal Judges, 1000 Main St., Lake Charles, LA 70615, (337) 433-9403, testified for information only and provided information in reference to the Third Circuit Court of Appeal. Chief Judge Cooks addressed questions from the task for members.

Chief Judge Milton Moore, Conference of Court of Appeal Judges, 430 Fannin St., Shreveport, LA 71101, (318) 227-3700, testified for information only and provided information in reference to the

Second Circuit Court of Appeal. Chief Judge Moore addressed questions from the task force members.

Judge Patricia Koch, president, Louisiana District Court Judges Association, 701 Murray St., Suite 501, Alexandria, LA 71301, (318) 443-6893, testified for information only and provided a commentary dated October 14, 2022, Exhibit B, which is included in the Judicial Structure Task Force records. Judge Koch addressed questions from the task force members.

Judge Tim Marcel, first vice president, Louisiana District Judges Association, 400 Royal St., Suite 1190, New Orleans, LA 70130, (504) 310-2616, testified for information only and provided information on behalf of the Louisiana District Judges Association, Exhibit C, which is included in the Judicial Structure Task Force records. Judge Marcel addressed questions from the task force members.

Judge Kelly Balfour, representing Louisiana District Judge Association and the 19th Judicial District Court, 300 North Blvd., Suite 10401, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 389-4765, testified for information only and provided information on behalf of the Louisiana District Judges Association.

Richard C. Stanley, chair, Louisiana State Bar Association, Appellate Section, Thomas M. Flanagan, past-chair, Louisiana Board of Legal Specialization Appellate Practice Advisory Committee, Peter Sperling, president, New Orleans Bar Association, and Martin Stern, past vice-chair, Louisiana Board of Legal Specialization Appellate Practice Advisory Commission, provided a letter dated October 6, 2022, Exhibit D, which is included in the Judicial Structure Task Force records.

Representative Zeringue stated that the next Judicial Structure Task Force meeting will be November 10, 2022, at 1:00 p.m.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

The minutes from the Judicial Structure Task Force dated August 18, 2022, and September 22, 2022, were presented to the committee for approval. Representative Hughes offered a motion to approve the minutes. Without objection, the minutes were approved by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representative Zeringue, Judge Castle, Judge Faulkner, Representative Hughes, Representative Muscarello, Judge Saloom, Judge Theriot, Representative Villio, and Chief Justice Weimer voted yea.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Jerome "Zee" Zeringue
Judicial Structure Task Force

Date adopted: _____