

House Committee on Administration of Criminal Justice

Minutes of Meeting
2024 Regular Session
May 15, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Debbie Villio, chair of the House Committee on Administration of Criminal Justice, called the meeting to order at 9:42 a.m. in Room 6, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Debbie Villio, chair
Representative Roy Daryl Adams
Representative Tony Bacala
Representative Chad Michael Boyer
Representative Vincent E. Cox, III
Representative Bryan Fontenot
Representative Dodie Horton
Representative Alonzo L. Knox
Representative Vanessa Caston LaFleur, vice chair
Representative Lauren Ventrella
Representative Joy Walters
Representative Jeffrey Fons "Jeff" Wiley

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative Patricia "Pat" Moore

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Zachary Gonzalez, attorney
Stephanie Weinman, committee administrative assistant

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Janet Anthony, sergeant at arms
Angela McKnight, sergeant at arms
Michael McCain, clerk

III. DISCUSSION OF LEGISLATION

Senate Bill No. 401 by Senator Reese

Senator Reese presented Senate Bill No. 401, which increases the penalties for the crimes of vehicular negligent injuring and first degree vehicular negligent injuring.

Representative Villio offered an amendment to specify that the term of imprisonment shall be with or without hard labor for any person who commits the offense of first degree vehicular negligent injuring with either a blood alcohol concentration of at least 0.15 or a prior conviction for operating a vehicle while intoxicated. Representative Villio offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendment. Without objection, the amendment was adopted by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Boyer, Cox, Fontenot, Horton, Knox, LaFleur, and Wiley voted yea.

Zach Daniels, Louisiana District Attorneys Association, 2525 Quail Dr., Baton Rouge, LA 70808, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 401.

Representative Horton offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 401 with amendments. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 401 was reported with amendments by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Boyer, Cox, Fontenot, Horton, Knox, LaFleur, and Wiley 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.

Senate Bill No. 467 by Senator Reese

Senator Reese presented Senate Bill No. 467, which provides for the office of the state public defender.

On behalf of the author, Representative Villio offered amendments to:

- (1) Make technical changes; and
- (2) Provide for additional court costs in certain mayor's courts with proceeds remitted to applicable indigent defender funds.

Representative Villio offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Boyer, Cox, Fontenot, Horton, Knox, LaFleur, and Wiley voted yea.

Representative Adams offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 467 with amendments. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 467 was reported with amendments by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Boyer, Cox, Fontenot, Horton, Knox, LaFleur, and Wiley voted yea.

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

House Bill No. 130 by Representative Bayham

Representative Bayham presented House Bill No. 130, which provides relative to the crime of molestation of a juvenile.

On behalf of the author, Representative Horton offered amendments to:

- (1) Make technical changes;
- (2) Specify that the crime of molestation of a juvenile applies to a person who is in a position of supervision or entrusted with a supervisory role of the juvenile that includes but is not limited to a religious, charitable, scientific, educational, athletic, or youth-serving purpose; and
- (3) Remove provisions of proposed law relative to application of present law involving clergymen and recreational instructors.

Representative Horton offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Boyer, Cox, Fontenot, Horton, Knox, LaFleur, and Wiley voted yea.

Zachary Popovich, 22nd Judicial District Court District Attorney's Office, 701 N. Columbia St., Ste. 200, Covington, LA 70433, spoke in support of House Bill No. 130.

Susan East Nelson, Louisiana Partnership for Children and Families, 7515 Jefferson Hwy. #52, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, spoke in support of House Bill No. 130.

Representative Cox offered a motion to report House Bill No. 130 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 130 was reported with amendments by a vote of 8 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Boyer, Cox, Fontenot, Horton, Knox, and Wiley 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.

Senate Bill No. 421 by Senator Luneau

Senator Luneau presented Senate Bill No. 421, which creates a renaissance district in certain parishes.

On behalf of the author, Representative Villio offered amendments to:

- (1) Make technical changes; and
- (2) Authorize the majority of electors in the district, rather than the parish of Rapides, to vote in an election held for the purpose of issuance of general obligation bonds.

Representative Villio offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 8 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Boyer, Cox, Horton, Knox, LaFleur, and Wiley voted yea.

Representative LaFleur offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 421 with amendments. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 421 was reported with amendments by a vote of 8 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Boyer, Cox, Horton, Knox, LaFleur, and Wiley 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.

Senate Bill No. 431 by Senator Cloud

On behalf of Senator Cloud, Representative Villio presented Senate Bill No. 431, which provides with respect to the creation of the Juvenile Detention Commission for the purpose of reviewing and recommending funding for juvenile detention centers.

Representative Horton offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 431 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 431 was reported favorably by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Boyer, Cox, Fontenot, Horton, Knox, LaFleur, and Wiley voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 8 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 32 by Senator Foil

On behalf of Senator Foil, Mary-Patricia Wray, Vera Institute, 711 N. 6th St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, presented Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 32, which requests the Department of Public Safety and Corrections to publish certain prison population data on its website.

Bruce Reilly, Voice of the Experienced, 4930 Washington Ave., New Orleans, LA 70125, spoke in support of Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 32.

Natalie LaBorde, Louisiana Department of Corrections, 504 Mayflower St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 32.

Representative Knox offered a motion to report Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 32 favorably. Without objection, Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 32 was reported favorably by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Bacala, Boyer, Cox, Fontenot, Horton, Knox, LaFleur, and Wiley voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 11 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 730 by Representative Mena

Representative Mena presented House Bill No. 730, which creates "The Fairness and Safety Act for Louisiana Incarcerated Workers".

On behalf of the author, Representative LaFleur offered an amendment to clarify the term "transitional work program" to include work that is done under the supervision of the sheriff of the parish where the individual is participating in such program. Representative LaFleur offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendment. Without objection, the amendment was adopted by a vote of 8 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Bacala, Cox, Fontenot, Knox, LaFleur, and Wiley voted yea.

Natalie LaBorde, Louisiana Department of Corrections, 504 Mayflower St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 730.

Bruce Reilly, Voice of the Experienced, 4930 Washington Ave., New Orleans, LA 70125, spoke in support of House Bill No. 730.

Hardell Ward, Promise of Justice Initiative, 1024 Elysian Fields Ave., New Orleans, LA 70116, spoke in support of House Bill No. 730.

Kelsey Jenkins, Invest in Louisiana, 619 Jefferson Hwy., Ste. 1D, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, spoke in support of House Bill No. 730.

Britt, 10,000 Women Louisiana, 18177 Dunnington Acres Dr., Hammond, LA 70401, spoke in support of House Bill No. 730.

Michael Ranatza, Louisiana Sheriffs' Association, 1175 Nicholson Dr., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 730.

Michael Cahoon, The Promise of Justice Initiative, 1024 Elysian Fields Ave., New Orleans, LA 70116, spoke in support of House Bill No. 730.

Checo Yancy, Voice of the Experienced, 251 Florida St., #201, Baton Rouge, LA 70801, spoke in support of House Bill No. 730.

Benjamin Zucker, Step Up Louisiana, 2022 St. Bernard Ave., New Orleans, LA 70116, spoke in support of House Bill No. 730.

Ronald Marshall, Voice of the Experienced, 4930 Washington Ave., New Orleans, LA 70125, spoke in support of House Bill No. 730.

Jacoby Lamar, 6157 Singleton Dr., Marrero, LA 70072, spoke in support of House Bill No. 730.

Representative Knox offered a motion to report House Bill No. 730 with amendments, to which Representative Fontenot objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and the motion failed to pass by a vote of 1 yeas and 10 nays. Representative Knox voted yea. Representatives Villio, Adams, Bacala, Boyer, Cox, Fontenot, Horton, LaFleur, Ventrella, and Wiley voted nay.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 24 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 79 by Senator Morris

Senator Morris presented Senate Bill No. 79, which constitutional amendment to eliminate judge's discretion to grant bail for certain offenses after conviction.

Bruce Reilly, Voice of the Experienced, 4930 Washington Ave., New Orleans, LA 70125, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 79.

Sammons Corbett, Louisiana Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, 830 Main St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 79.

Katie Hunter-Lowrey, Vera Louisiana, 2021 Lakeshore Dr., New Orleans, LA 70122, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 79.

Will Harrell, Orleans Parish Sheriffs' Office, 2800 Perdido St., New Orleans, LA 70119, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 79.

Ezra Harrell, Orleans Parish Sheriffs' Office, 2800 Perdido St., New Orleans, LA 70119, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 79.

William Most, Most and Associates, 201 St. Charles Ave., Ste. 2500, #9685, New Orleans, LA 70170, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 79.

Representative Bacala offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 79 favorably, to which Representative LaFleur objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and Senate Bill No. 79 was reported favorably by a vote of 8 yeas and 2 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Bacala, Boyer, Cox, Fontenot, Horton, and Wiley voted yea. Representatives Knox and LaFleur voted nay.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 2 in support and 20 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 413 by Senator Miller

Senator Miller presented Senate Bill No. 413, which prohibits early termination of probation and parole for certain offenses.

On behalf of the author, Representative Villio offered amendments to:

- (1) Make technical changes;
- (2) Remove provisions relative to early termination of parole; and
- (3) Relative to termination of probation or suspended sentence, move proposed law relative to vehicular negligent injuring from provisions of present law pertaining to felony cases to provisions of present law pertaining to misdemeanor cases.

Representative Villio offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 8 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Cox, Knox, LaFleur, Ventrella, Walters, and Wiley voted yea.

William Starr, St. Charles Parish District Attorney's Association, 3505 Lake Kristin Dr., Gretna, LA 70506, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 413.

Representative Adams offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 413 with amendments. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 413 was reported with amendments by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Adams, Bacala, Boyer, Cox, Knox, Ventrella, Walters, and Wiley voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 1 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 590 by Representative Jordan

Representative Jordan presented House Bill No. 590, which provides relative to inmates held beyond their release dates within the Dept. of Public Safety and Corrections.

On behalf of the author, Representative Villio offered an amendment to make technical changes. Representative Villio offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendment. Without objection, the amendment was adopted by a vote of 7 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Bacala, Cox, Fontenot, Horton, Walters, and Wiley voted yea.

William Most, Most and Associates, 201 St. Charles Ave., # 2500, Ste. 9685, New Orleans, LA 70170, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 590.

Michael Ranatza, executive director, Louisiana Sheriffs' Association, 1175 Nicholson Dr., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 730.

Dennis Grimes, Louisiana Sheriffs' Association, 1175 Nicholson Dr., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 730.

Representative Walters offered a motion to report House Bill No. 590 with amendments, to which Representative Bacala objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and the motion failed to pass by a vote of 3 yeas and 7 nays. Representatives Knox, LaFleur, and Walters voted yea. Representatives Villio, Bacala, Boyer, Cox, Fontenot, Horton, and Wiley voted nay.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 25 in support and 1 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 371 by Senator Barrow

Senator Barrow presented Senate Bill No. 371, which provides for surgical castration of persons convicted of certain crimes when the victim is under the age of thirteen.

Bruce Reilly, Voice of the Experienced, 4930 Washington Ave., New Orleans, LA 70125, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 371.

Morgan Lamandre, Sexual Trauma Awareness and Response, 5615 Corporate Blvd., Ste. 200, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 371.

Representative Bacala offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 371 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 371 was reported favorably by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Villio, Bacala, Boyer, Cox, Fontenot, Horton, LaFleur, Walters, and Wiley voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 1 in support and 29 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair Debbie Villio
House Committee on Administration of Criminal Justice