

House Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture, and Rural Development

Minutes of Meeting
2024 Regular Session
March 28, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Troy D. Romero, chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture, and Rural Development, called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m. in Room 3, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Troy D. Romero, chairman
Representative Beryl A. Amedée
Representative Lawrence A. "Larry" Bagley
Representative Chad Michael Boyer
Representative Marcus Anthony Bryant
Representative Rhonda Gaye Butler
Representative Kimberly Landry Coates
Representative Chance Keith Henry
Representative C. Travis Johnson, vice chairman
Representative Jacob Jules Gabriel Landry
Representative Danny McCormick
Representative Wayne McMahan
Representative Rodney Wayne Schamerhorn
Representative Vincent "Vinney" J. St. Blanc, III
Representative Christopher Turner
Representative John E. Wyble

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative Adrian Fisher
Representative Larry Selders
Representative Francis C. Thompson

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Lashay Masami, attorney
Ashley Davillier, committee administrative assistant

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Rebecca Marshall, sergeant at arms
Cesilee Oliver, clerk

III. DISCUSSION OF LEGISLATION

House Bill No. 238 by Representative Echols

On behalf of Representative Echols, Representative Wyble presented House Bill No. 238, which provides relative to agriculture land protection against foreign adversaries.

Mr. Christopher Holton, Center for Security Policy, 2701 Airline Drive, Suite K, Metairie, LA 70001, spoke in support of House Bill No. 238.

Commissioner Mike Strain, LDAF, Third Floor, Capitol, no city provided, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 238.

Representative Bagley offered a motion to report House Bill No. 238 favorably with recommendation that it be recommitted to the Committee on Appropriations. Without objection, House Bill No. 238 was reported favorably with recommendation that it be recommitted to the Committee on Appropriations by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Romero, Amedee, Bagley, Boyer, Bryant, Butler, Coates, Henry, Jacob Landry, McCormick, McMahan, Schamerhorn, St. Blanc, Turner, and Wyble voted yea.

Witness cards presented by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 4 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 238 pursuant to House Rule 14.33.

House Bill No. 346 by Representative Butler

Representative Butler presented House Bill No. 346, which provides relative to arboricultural and utility arboricultural examination and license renewal requirements.

Representative Romero offered amendments to:

1. Add the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center to the entities required to submit questions for the arboricultural examination and utility arboricultural examination.

2. Authorize any other entity as determined by the commission to administer the continuing training seminars for license renewals for arborists and utility arborists.

Representative Romero offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Romero, Amedee, Bagley, Boyer, Bryant, Butler, Coates, Henry, Jacob Landry, McCormick, McMahan, Schamerhorn, St. Blanc, Turner, and Wyble voted yea.

Commissioner Mike Strain, LDAF, no address provided, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 346.

Mr. Daryn Bovard, LA Arborist Assoc., 506 Spanish Town, Baton Rouge, LA, spoke in support of House Bill No. 346.

Representative Bryant offered a motion to report House Bill No. 346 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 346 was reported with amendments by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Romero, Amedee, Boyer, Bryant, Butler, Coates, Henry, C. Travis Johnson, Jacob Landry, McCormick, McMahan, Schamerhorn, St. Blanc, Turner, and Wyble voted yea.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS AND STAFF:

The committee members introduced themselves and gave a brief overview of their respective districts. Representative Romero introduced the committee staff members.

DISCUSSION OF ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS:

Protocol and purpose of committee

Lashay Masami, committee attorney, explained that committees are the public's access to the legislative process and that it is also a constitutionally required step in passing legislation. She added that the purpose of the committee is to screen and filter legislation for the House, both through the development of subject matter expertise and by stopping unfavorable or unnecessary legislation.

Jurisdiction, rules and procedures

Lashay Masami, committee attorney, explained the committee's jurisdiction, in accordance with the rules, includes all legislative instruments, messages, petitions, memorials, and other matters relating to the following subjects: agriculture generally; agricultural and industrial chemistry; agricultural economics and research; agricultural engineering; agricultural production on public lands; agricultural production, promotion, and marketing; agricultural services; animal industry and

diseases of animals; aquacultural economics and research; aquacultural production, promotion, and marketing; dairy industry; production, promotion, harvesting, and marketing of forestry products; silviculture; human nutrition and home economics; inspection of livestock and meat products; plant industry and plant quarantine; rural development; soils and soil conservation.

Consideration and adoption of committee rules

Representative Romero offered a motion to adopt the committee rules. Without objection, the rules were adopted by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Romero, Amedee, Bagley, Boyer, Butler, Coates, Henry, C. Travis Johnson, Jacob Landry, McCormick, McMahan, Schamerhorn, St. Blanc, Turner, and Wyble voted yea.

Consideration and adoption of 2023 Regular Session committee minutes

The minutes from the 2023 Regular Session dated May 3 and May 18 were presented to the committee for approval. Representative Turner offered a motion to approve the minutes. Without objection, the minutes were approved by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Romero, Amedee, Bagley, Boyer, Butler, Coates, Henry, C. Travis Johnson, Jacob Landry, McCormick, McMahan, Schamerhorn, St. Blanc, Turner, and Wyble voted yea.

PRESENTATIONS:

Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry

Commissioner Mike Strain, LDAF, no address provided, presented a PowerPoint and gave an overview of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry. He provided handouts entitled "Louisiana Market Bulletin", Exhibit A, and "Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry", Exhibit B, which are included in the committee records.

Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center

Dr. Orlando F. McMeans, SU Ag Center, J.S. Clark Administration Building, no city provided, presented a PowerPoint and provided an overview of the Southern University Ag Center.

Ms. Katara Williams, SU Ag Center, J.S. Clark Administration Building, Baton Rouge, LA 70813, accompanied Dr. McMeans on his presentation and invited the committee members to an event at the pentagon hosted by the Southern University Ag Center.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Amedee offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Romero, Amedee, Bagley, Butler, Coates, C. Travis Johnson, Jacob Landry, McMahan, and St. Blanc voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Troy D. Romero
House Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture, and Rural Development

Date adopted: