

House Committee on Education

Minutes of Meeting
2024 Regular Session
May 14, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Laurie Schlegel, chair of the House Committee on Education, called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. in Room 1, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Laurie Schlegel, chair
Representative Beryl A. Amedée, vice chair
Representative Kendrick "Ken" Brass
Representative Josh Carlson
Representative Kim Carver
Representative Kathy Edmonston
Representative Barbara Reich Freiberg
Representative Michael Melerine
Representative Charles Anthony Owen
Representative Vincent "Vinney" J. St. Blanc, III
Representative Phillip Eric Tarver
Representative Sylvia Elaine Taylor
Representative Rashid Armand Young

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative Barbara W. Carpenter

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Elizabeth L. Borne, legislative analyst
Lisa Lovello, legislative analyst
Alexandra Cravins, committee administrative assistant
Frank Meyer, IV, clerk

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Myrtis Jarrell, sergeant at arms

III. BUSINESS

Senate Bill No. 213 by Senator Jenkins

On behalf of Senator Jenkins, Representative Brass presented Senate Bill No. 213, which provides sick leave for school employees under certain circumstances.

Cynthia Posey, Louisiana Federation of Teachers, 9623 Brookline, Baton Rouge, LA 70809, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 213.

Michael Faulk, Louisiana Association of School Superintendents, 2713 Indian Mound Boulevard, Monroe, LA 71201, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 213.

Marcus Thomas, Louisiana Association of Educators, 8322 One Calais Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70809, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 213.

Representative Young offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 213 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 213 was reported favorably by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Brass, Carlson, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Melerine, St. Blanc, Tarver, Taylor, and Young 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. 336 by Senator Pressly

On behalf of Senator Pressly, Joseph Marino, 200 Amelia Street, Gretna, LA 70053, presented Senate Bill No. 336, which provides for dyslexia screening and subsequent testing and core assessment.

Representative Schlegel offered amendments to Senate Bill No. 336 that reverted provisions pertaining to the dyslexia screener to present law rather than requiring that the screener be a computer software program. Representative Schlegel offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Brass, Carlson, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Melerine, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, Taylor, and Young voted yea.

Laura Cassidy, Dyslexia Resource Center, 2900 Westfork, Suite 400, Baton Rouge, LA, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 336.

Quintle Slaughter, 5520 Johnston Street, Suite K, PMB 1128, Lafayette, LA, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 336.

Michael Faulk, Louisiana Association of School Superintendents, 2713 Indian Mound Boulevard, Monroe, LA 71201, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 336.

Representative Edmonston offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 336 with amendments. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 336 was reported with amendments by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Brass, Carlson, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Melerine, Owen, Tarver, Taylor, and Young 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. 72 by Senator Pressly

On behalf of Senator Pressly, Joseph Marino, 200 Amelia Street, Gretna, LA 70053, presented Senate Bill No. 72, which exempts students with dyslexia from certain literacy examinations and provides for alternative progress monitoring tests.

Representative Schlegel offered amendments to House Bill No. 72 that required the Department of Education to request authorization from the U.S. Department of Education to implement the provisions of proposed law and required public school governing authorities to implement the provisions of proposed law after notification of such authorization from the Department of Education. Representative Schlegel offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Carlson, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Melerine, Tarver, Taylor, and Young voted yea.

DeJunné Clark Jackson, Decoding Dyslexia Louisiana, 14241 Coursey Boulevard, Suite A12, Baton Rouge, LA 70817, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 72.

Laura Cassidy, Dyslexia Resource Center, 2900 Westfork, Suite 400, Baton Rouge, LA, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 72

Representative Freiberg offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 72 with amendments. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 72 was reported with amendments by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Carlson, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Melerine, Tarver, Taylor, and Young voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 8 in support, 4 in opposition, and 1 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Senate Bill No. 205 by Senator Miguez

On behalf of Senator Miguez, Marcus Thomas, Louisiana Association of Educators, 8322 One Calais Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70809, presented Senate Bill No. 205, which requires additional compensation for teachers and other school employees under certain circumstances.

Michael Faulk, Louisiana Association of School Superintendents, 2713 Indian Mound Boulevard, Monroe, LA 71201, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 205.

Cynthia Posey, Louisiana Federation of Teachers, 9623 Brookline, Baton Rouge, LA 70809, spoke in support of Senate Bill No. 205.

Representative Young offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 205 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 205 was reported favorably by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Carlson, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Melerine, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, Taylor, and Young voted yea.

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

Senate Bill No. 262 by Senator Hodges

Senator Hodges presented Senate Bill No. 262, which expands the Parents' Bill of Rights for Public Schools.

Bruce Reilly, VOTE, 4950 Washington Ave., New Orleans, LA 70125, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 262.

Esther deJong, IWO, 950 Picheloup Place, New Orleans, LA 70119, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 262.

Danielle Moses, 1604 E. Frisco Drive, LaPlace, LA 70068, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 262.

Representative Carlson offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 262 favorably, to which Representative Freiberg objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and Senate Bill No. 262 was reported favorably by a vote of 8 yeas and 3 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Carlson, Carver, Edmonston, Melerine, Owen, and St. Blanc voted yea. Representatives Freiberg, Taylor, and Young voted nay.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 10 in support, and 14 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for Senate Bill No. 262 pursuant to House Rule 14.33.

Senate Bill No. 294 by Senator Hodges

Senator Hodges presented Senate Bill No. 294, which confirms the protections of free speech and First Amendment protected activities on college and university campuses.

Representative Melerine offered amendments to Senate Bill No. 294 that:

1. Changed the definition of "material and substantial disruption" to include the crime of attempted battery instead of attempted assault.
2. Removed the limitation on the definition of "student-on-student discriminatory harassment" to only victims who are members of a protected class of individuals.
3. Added remedy provisions.

Representative Melerine offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Carlson, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Melerine, Owen, St. Blanc, Taylor, and Young voted yeas.

Alex Jaouiche, 3700 Orleans Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70119, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 294.

Pablo Zavalla, address not provided, New Orleans, LA 70117, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 294.

Islam Elrabieey, address illegible, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 294.

Brian Lucas, Tulane University School of Public Health, 200 Carondelet Street, Unit 1507, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 294.

Carson Cruse, Loyola Students for a Democratic Society, 6363 Saint Charles Avenue, New Orleans, LA, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 294.

Dr. Hakm Murad, 3416 Louise Street, Harvey, LA 70056, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 294.

Bruce Reilly, VOTE, 4930 Washington Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70125, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 294.

Wash Fields, 1904 Broadway Street, New Orleans, LA 70118, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 294.

Sabrina Mohamad, 83 Monterrey Drive, Kenner LA 70065, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 294.

Jack Reno Sweeney, 2915 Banks Street, New Orleans, LA 70119, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill No. 294.

Representative Edmonston offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 294 with amendments. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 294 was reported with amendments by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Carlson, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Melerine, Owen, St. Blanc, Taylor, and Young voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 11 in support, and 3 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for Senate Bill No. 294 pursuant to House Rule 14.33.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

Dr. Kim Hunter-Reed, commissioner of Higher Education, no address provided, spoke for information only and provided a handout entitled "Louisiana's Progress Towards Overall Attainment", Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records.

T. Jay Seale, III, vice chairman of the Board of Regents, 17245 English Saddle Lane, Hammond, LA 70403, spoke for information only.

Richard "Rick" Gallot, Jr., president of the University of Louisiana System, no address provided, spoke for information only and provided a handout entitled "University of Louisiana System", Exhibit B, which is included in the committee records.

Dennis J. Shields, president of the Southern University System, J.S. Clark Building, Fourth Floor, Baton Rouge, LA 70813, spoke for information only.

Matt Lee, vice president for Agriculture and dean of the College of Agriculture, designee of William F. Tate, IV, president of the Louisiana State University System, Baton Rouge, LA 70803, spoke for information only.

Monty Sullivan, president of the Louisiana Community and Technical College System, 265 South Foster, Geismer, LA 70734, spoke for information only.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Carlson offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Carlson, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Melerine, Owen, St. Blanc, Taylor, and Young voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair Laurie Schlegel
House Committee on Education

Date adopted: