

Joint Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works

Minutes of Meeting
2023-2024 Interim
March 7, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Ryan Bourriaque, chairman of the House Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works, called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. in Room 6, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

HOUSE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Ryan Bourriaque, chairman
Representative Chad Michael Boyer
Representative Jacob Braud
Representative Tehmi Jahi Chassion
Representative Kellee Hennessy Dickerson
Representative Bryan Fontenot, vice chairman
Representative Patricia "Pat" Moore
Representative Rodney Wayne Schamerhorn
Representative Joy Walters
Representative Jeffrey Fons "Jeff" Wiley

HOUSE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative Steven Jackson
Representative C. Travis Johnson
Representative Tammy T. Phelps

SENATE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Patrick Connick, chairman
Senator Mark Abraham
Senator Gary M. Carter Jr., vice chairman
Senator Patrick McMath
Senator Edward J. "Ed" Price

SENATE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Senator Heather Cloud
Senator William "Bill" Wheat Jr.

HOUSE STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Allison Williams, legislative analyst
Jennifer Winkler, legislative analyst
Darcas Deverteuil, committee admin. ast.

SENATE STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Archana Cadge, attorney
Serena Mohammad, secretary

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Myrtis Jarrell, sergeant at arms

III. DISCUSSION**Public Hearing for the 2024-2025 priority list for the Statewide Flood Control Program**

Lucas Johnson, Statewide Flood Control, no address provided spoke for information only for the Statewide Flood Control Program, and provided a handout, Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records.

Representative Bourriaque asked Mr. Johnson to explain the application process to the new committee members to which Mr. Johnson explained the criteria and the process in depth.

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

Public Hearing for the 2024-2025 priority list for the Airport Construction and Development Priority Program

Bradley Brandt, DOTD- office of multimodal commerce, 1201 Capitol Access Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on the Airport Construction and Development Priority Program, and provided a handout, Exhibit B, which is included in the committee records.

Representative Bourriaque and Senator Connick asked Mr. Brandt questions about program funding to which Mr. Brandt explained the funding process in depth on state, local, and federal levels.

Michael Burrows, 1201 Capitol Access Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on the Airport Construction and Development Priority Program. He and Mr. Brandt answered a series of questions from Senator Abraham regarding how the project selection process works, project completion time, and questions about different projects included in the program.

Mr. Brandt also answered a series of questions from Representatives, Boyer, Dickerson, Fontenot, Schamerhorn and Wilder on the programs scoring system, sales tax, long range unfunded projects, and the Louisiana Department of Revenue.

Senator Connick requested Mike Waguespack to come to the witness table.

Mike Waguespack, Louisiana Legislative Auditor, P.O. Box 94397, Baton Rouge, LA spoke for information only and explained the findings of the Louisiana Department of Revenue's Audit in depth.

Colonel Kevin Melton, Chernault International Airport, 3650 Senator J. Bennett Johnson Avenue, Lake Charles, LA 70615, spoke for information only on the Airport Construction and Development Priority Program.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 9 in support and 2 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Public Hearing for the 2024-2025 priority list for the Port Construction and Development Priority Program

Mary "Molly" Bourgoyne, DOTD-office of multimodal commerce, 1201 Capitol Access Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on the Port Construction and Development Priority Program, and presented a presentation, as well as a handout, Exhibit C, which is included in the committee records.

Representative Bourriaque suggested to the department to provide the committees of the legislature with more data and information that can urge and show members the benefit of investing funding in the ports, and what the different ports produce.

Craig Romero, Port of Iberia, 4611 S. Lewis Street, New Iberia 70560, spoke in support of the Port Priority Program.

Senator Abraham and Representative Schamerhorn asked Ms. Bourgoyne a series of questions about program funding and project priority ranking to which she explained in depth. Senator Abraham also requested that Dr. Barns come to the next committee meeting to explain the audit and the return on investment on ports to the members.

Senator Connick asked Craig Romero questions about the application process for the Port of Iberia. Senator Connick also asked questions about the Dredge Priority Fund. Randall Withers, DOTD-office of multimodal commerce, 1201 Capitol Access Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on the Port Construction and Development Priority Program and informed Senator Connick that the rules are still being published and that the program has not been funded to date.

Representative Fontenot asked a series of questions about ports bidding for work, state funding, port tonnage and port locations to which Ms. Bourgoyne and Craig Romero answered and explained the system that are in place to ensure that the Port is rarely competing for jobs or funding.

Norby Chabert, Port of Terrebonne, no address provided, spoke for information only on the Port Priority Program. He answered questions from Representative Fontenot about both deep and shallow water ports.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 7 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Public Hearing for the 2024-2025 priority list for Class II and III Rail Infrastructure Improvement Program (Freight Rail)

J. Dean Goodell, Class II and III Rail Infrastructure Improvement Program, 1201 Capitol Access Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on the Class II and III Rail Infrastructure Improvement Program, and provided a handout, Exhibit D, which is included in the committee records.

Senator Carter asked Mr. Goodell for an update about the passenger rail service in Louisiana to which Mr. Goodell described the Amtrak future routes in depth.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Boyer offered a motion to adjourn on behalf of the House Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Bourriaque, Boyer, Braud, Chassion, Dickerson, Fontenot, Moore, Schamerhorn, Walters, and Wiley voted yea.

Senator Abraham offered a motion to adjourn on behalf of the Senate Committee on Transportation, Highways, and Public Works. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 5 yeas and 0 nays. Senators Connick, Carter, Abraham, McMath, and Price voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Ryan Bourriaque
House Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works

Date adopted: