

House Committee on Labor and Industrial Relations

Minutes of Meeting
2024 Regular Session
April 11, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Raymond J. Crews, chair of the House Committee on Labor and Industrial Relations, called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m. in Room 5, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Raymond J. Crews, chair
Representative Dennis Bamburg, Jr.
Representative Tehmi Jahi Chassion
Representative Jason Brian Dewitt
Representative Michael Charles Echols
Representative Brian Leonard Glorioso
Representative Dodie Horton, vice chair
Representative Ed Larvadain, III
Representative Dixon Wallace McMakin
Representative Michael Melerine
Representative Shaun Raphael Mena
Representative Tammy T. Phelps
Representative Phillip Eric Tarver
Representative Joy Walters
Representative Roger William Wilder, III

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jurissa McGuire, attorney
Felicie Jackson, executive assistant

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Nevonda Reed Dobard, division director
Jaubert Ambeau, chief sergeant at arms
Elizabeth Douglas, sergeant at arms
Stephen Louis, assistant sergeant at arms
Angela Mamou, assistant sergeant at arms
Donell Francois, assistant sergeant at arms
Danny Leming, assistant chief sergeant at arms

III. DISCUSSION OF LEGISLATION**House Bill No. 863 by Representative Echols**

Representative Echols presented House Bill No. 863, which provides for adoption of a medical fee reimbursement schedule for workers' compensation.

Brian Blackwood, Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC), 1001 N. 3rd St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 863.

Larry Verges, Ambulatory Surgery Center Association (ASCA), 1207 N. Causeway Blvd., Metairie, LA 70001, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 863.

Representative Dewitt offered a motion to invoke the three-minute rule. After discussion, the motion was withdrawn. No vote was taken.

Cindy Bishop, ASCA, P.O. Box 80053, Baton Rouge, LA 70898, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 863.

Shannon Dartez, Injured Workers and Healthcare Providers, 206 Traditions Dr., Lafayette LA 70508, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 863.

Monica Murphy, 8118 Laurel Rd., Collinston, LA 71229, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 863.

Don Caffery, Louisiana Orthopaedic Association (LOC), 822 Harding St., Ste. 307, Lafayette, LA 70503, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 863.

Representative Horton offered a motion to report House Bill No. 863 favorably, to which Representative Larvadain objected. The executive assistant called the roll, and the motion failed to pass by a vote of 5 yeas and 9 nays. Representatives Crews, Echols, Horton, Melerine, and Tarver

voted yea. Representatives Chassion, Dewitt, Glorioso, Larvadain, McMakin, Mena, Phelps, Walters, and Wilder voted nay.

Representative Echols offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 863. Without objection, action on House Bill No. 863 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Crews, Chassion, Dewitt, Echols, Glorioso, Horton, Larvadain, McMakin, Melerine, Mena, Phelps, Tarver, Walters, and Wilder voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 22 in support and 29 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 863 pursuant to House Rule 14.33.

Further action was taken by the committee on House Bill No. 864 on April 18, 2024. Please check for the subsequent action to complete the record of discussion and motions on House Bill No. 863.

House Bill No. 431 by Representative Boyd

Representative Boyd presented House Bill No. 431, which provides relative to the state minimum wage.

Susana Schowen, LWC, 1001 N. 23rd St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 431.

Christina LeBlanc, Invest in Louisiana, 619 Jefferson Hwy., Baton Rouge, LA 70806, spoke in support of House Bill No. 431.

Peter Robins-Brown, Louisiana American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), 429 Government St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke in support of House Bill No. 431.

Melissa Flournoy, 10,000 Women, 650 N. 6th St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke in support of House Bill No. 431.

Britain Forsyth, Step Up for Action, 2819 Pine St., New Orleans, LA 70125, spoke in support of House Bill No. 431.

Leah Long, National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB), 301 N. Main St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 431.

Patrick Robinson, Louisiana Association of Business and Industry (LABI), 500 Main St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 431.

Representative Phelps offered a motion to report House Bill No. 431 favorably, to which Representative Wilder objected. The executive assistant called the roll, and the motion failed to pass by a vote of 5 yeas and 10 nays. Representatives Chassion, Larvadain, Mena, Phelps, and Walters voted yea. Representatives Crews, Bamburg, Dewitt, Echols, Glorioso, Horton, McMakin, Melerine, Tarver, and Wilder voted nay.

Representative Crews offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 431. Without objection, action on House Bill No. 431 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Crews, Bamburg, Chassion, Dewitt, Echols, Glorioso, Horton, Larvadain, McMakin, Melerine, Mena, Phelps, Tarver, Walters, and Wilder voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 13 in support and 3 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 234 by Representative Boyd

Representative Boyd presented House Bill No. 234, which provides relative to employment discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation.

Melissa Flournoy, 10,000 Women, 650 N. 6th St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke in support of House Bill No. 234.

Representative Chassion offered a motion to invoke the three-minute rule for testimony for the duration of the meeting. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 9 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Crews, Chassion, Dewitt, Echols, Larvadain, McMakin, Mena, Walters, and Wilder voted yea.

Sarah Jane Guidry, Forum for Equality, 4962 Demontluzin St., New Orleans, LA 70122, spoke in support of House Bill No. 234.

Britain Forsyth, Step Up for Action, 2819 Pine St., New Orleans, LA 70125, spoke in support of House Bill No. 234.

Christopher Alexander, Louisiana Citizen Advocacy Group, P.O. Box 64952, Baton Rouge, LA 70896, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 234.

Will Hall, Louisiana Baptist Office of Public Policy, 1250 MacArthur Dr., Alexandria, LA 71309, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 234.

Representative Larvadain offered a motion to report House Bill No. 234 favorably, to which Representative Tarver objected. The executive assistant called the roll, and the motion failed to pass by a vote of 5 yeas and 10 nays. Representatives Chassion, Larvadain, Mena, Phelps, and Walters voted yea. Representatives Crews, Bamburg, Dewitt, Echols, Glorioso, Horton, McMakin, Melerine, Tarver, and Wilder voted nay.

Representative Larvadain offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 234. Without objection, action on House Bill No. 234 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Crews, Bamburg, Chassion, Dewitt, Echols, Glorioso, Horton, Larvadain, McMakin, Melerine, Mena, Phelps, Tarver, Walters, and Wilder voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 10 in support and 13 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 234 pursuant to House Rule 14.33.

House Bill No. 290 by Representative Marcelle

Representative Marcelle presented House Bill No. 290, which establishes a state minimum wage rate.

Patrick Robinson, LABI, 500 Main St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 290.

Leah Long, NFIB, 301 N. Main St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 290.

Representative Walters offered a motion to report House Bill No. 290 favorably, to which Representative Melerine objected. The executive assistant called the roll, and the motion failed to pass by a vote of 5 yeas and 10 nays. Representatives Chassion, Larvadain, Mena, Phelps, and Walters voted yea. Representatives Crews, Bamburg, Dewitt, Echols, Glorioso, Horton, McMakin, Melerine, Tarver, and Wilder voted nay.

Representative Larvadain offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 290. Without objection, action on House Bill No. 290 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Crews, Bamburg, Chassion, Dewitt, Echols, Glorioso, Horton, Larvadain, McMakin, Melerine, Mena, Phelps, Tarver, Walters, and Wilder voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 18 in support and 3 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 352 by Representative Tarver

Representative Horton in the chair.

Representative Tarver presented House Bill No. 352, which provides relative to the final payment after termination of employment.

Andrew Halverson, LABI, 325 Settlers Trace Blvd., Ste. 201, Lafayette, LA 70508, spoke in support of House Bill No. 352.

Representative Tarver offered a motion to report House Bill No. 352 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 352 was reported favorably by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Chassion, Dewitt, Echols, Glorioso, Horton, Larvadain, McMakin, Melerine, Mena, Tarver, Walters, and Wilder voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 13 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Representative Crews in the chair.

House Bill No. 247 by Representative Echols

Representative Echols presented House Bill No. 247, which provides relative to criminal penalties for accepting overpayment of unemployment benefits.

Representative Dewitt offered an amendment originating in committee to reduce the penalty from one thousand dollars to five hundred dollars. After discussion, Representative Dewitt withdrew his motion.

Representative Crews offered amendments to make technical changes. Representative Crews offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Crews, Chassion, Dewitt, Echols, Glorioso, Larvadain, McMakin, Melerine, Mena, Tarver, Walters, and Wilder voted yea.

Robert Wooley, LWC, 1001 N. 23rd St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 247.

Representative Echols offered a motion to report House Bill No. 247 with amendments, to which Representative Larvadain objected. The executive assistant called the roll, and House Bill No. 247 was reported with amendments by a vote of 9 yeas and 5 nays. Representatives Crews, Bamburg, Dewitt, Echols, Glorioso, McMakin, Melerine, Tarver, and Wilder voted yea. Representatives Chassion, Larvadain, Mena, Phelps, and Walters voted nay.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 4 in support, 2 in opposition, and 1 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 198 by Representative Echols

This is a continuation of the discussion on House Bill No. 198 from a meeting held on March 28, 2024. Please check for the prior action to complete the record of discussion and motions on House Bill No. 198.

Representative Echols presented House Bill No. 198, which provides for adoption of a medical fee reimbursement schedule for workers' compensation.

Representative Echols offered a motion to withdraw the amendments adopted on March 28, 2024. Without objection, the amendments were withdrawn by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Crews, Bamburg, Chassion, Dewitt, Echols, Glorioso, Larvadain, McMakin, Melerine, Mena, Phelps, Tarver, Walters, and Wilder voted yea.

Representative Echols offered amendments to change the calculation of the fee schedule from one hundred fifty percent to five hundred percent of Medicare. Representative Echols offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Crews, Bamburg, Chassion, Dewitt, Echols, Glorioso, Larvadain, McMakin, Melerine, Mena, Tarver, Walters, and Wilder voted yea.

Representative Echols offered a motion to report House Bill No. 198 with amendments, to which Representative Larvadain objected. The executive assistant called the roll, and the motion failed to pass by a vote of 6 yeas and 9 nays. Representatives Crews, Bamburg, Echols, Horton, Melerine, and Wilder voted yea. Representatives Chassion, Dewitt, Glorioso, Larvadain, McMakin, Mena, Phelps, Tarver, and Walters voted nay.

Representative Echols offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Bill No. 198. Without objection, action on House Bill No. 198 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Crews, Bamburg, Chassion, Dewitt, Echols, Glorioso, Horton, Larvadain, McMakin, Melerine, Mena, Phelps, Tarver, Walters, and Wilder voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 14 in support and 33 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 198 pursuant to House Rule 14.33.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Melerine offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Crews, Bamburg, Chassion, Dewitt, Echols, Glorioso, Larvadain, McMakin, Melerine, Mena, Phelps, Tarver, Walters, and Wilder voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Raymond J. Crews
House Committee on Labor and Industrial Relations

Date adopted: