

House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment

Minutes of Meeting
2024 Regular Session
March 21, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Brett F. Geymann, chairman of the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. in Room 4, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Brett F. Geymann, chairman
Representative Marcus Anthony Bryant
Representative R. Dewith Carrier
Representative Tehmi Jahi Chassion
Representative Kimberly Landry Coates
Representative Jason Brian Dewitt
Representative C. Travis Johnson
Representative Timothy P. Kerner
Representative Jeremy S. LaCombe
Representative Jacob Jules Gabriel Landry
Representative Shane Mack
Representative Danny McCormick
Representative Joseph A. Orgeron, vice chairman
Representative Neil Riser
Representative Jerome Zeringue

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Robin Stalder, attorney
Benjamin Westra, attorney
Lacy Slaughter, committee administrative assistant

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Cheryl Domino, sergeant at arms

III. DISCUSSION OF LEGISLATION**House Bill No. 537 by Representative Bourriague**

Representative Bourriague presented House Bill No. 537, which reallocates money received from fur trapping licenses.

Cole Garrett, LDWF, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 537.

Representative Geymann offered an amendment to delete "excess from" from provisions governing revenues received by the state from trapper licensing fees. The effect of the amendment is to authorize and direct the state treasurer to transfer annually all revenues derived from the licensing fees into the Louisiana Fur Public Education and Marketing Fund.

Representative Geymann offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Carrier, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, C. Travis Johnson, Kerner, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, and Zeringue voted yea.

Representative Dewitt offered a motion to report House Bill No. 537 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 537 was reported with amendments by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Carrier, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, C. Travis Johnson, Kerner, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, and Zeringue voted yea.

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

House Bill No. 538 by Representative Boyer

Representative Boyer presented House Bill No. 538, which authorizes the transfer of certain state property in St. Martin parish.

Representative Dewitt offered a motion to report House Bill No. 538 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 538 was reported favorably by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Carrier, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, C. Travis Johnson, Kerner, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, and Zeringue voted yea.

House Bill No. 297 by Representative McCormick

Representative McCormick presented House Bill No. 297, which provides relative to sale of property in Caddo Parish.

Representative Geymann offered a motion to report House Bill No. 297 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 297 was reported favorably by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Carrier, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, C. Travis Johnson, Kerner, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, and Zeringue voted yea.

House Bill No. 382 by Representative Dewitt

Representative Dewitt presented House Bill No. 382, which repeals obsolete hunting license provisions.

Cole Garrett, LDWF, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 382.

Representative Dewitt offered a motion to report House Bill No. 382 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 382 was reported favorably by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Carrier, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, C. Travis Johnson, Kerner, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, and Zeringue voted yea.

House Bill No. 460 by Representative Kerner

Representative Kerner presented House Bill No. 460, which allows full size trawl gear for bait shrimp on permitted vessels.

Cole Garrett, LDWF, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 460.

Representative Kerner offered amendments to make an exception for taking bait shrimp with the special bait dealers permit provided by the commission pursuant to present law.

Representative Kerner offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Carrier, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, Kerner, LaCombe, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, and Zeringue voted yea.

Representative Orgeron offered a motion to report House Bill No. 460 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 460 was reported with amendments by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays.

Representatives Geymann, Carrier, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, Kerner, LaCombe, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, and Zeringue voted yea.

House Bill No. 559 by Representative Zeringue

Representative Zeringue presented House Bill No. 559, which allocates revenue collected from waterfowl licenses to the Duck Stamp Fund.

Cole Garrett, LDWF, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 559.

Representative Zeringue offered a motion to report House Bill No. 559 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 559 was reported favorably by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Orgeron, Carrier, Chassion, Coates, Kerner, LaCombe, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Riser, and Zeringue voted yea.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 559 pursuant to House Rule 14.33.

House Bill No. 400 by Representative Riser

Representative Riser presented House Bill No. 400, which provides relative to lifetime combination hunting and fishing licenses.

Representative Riser offered amendments to:

- (1) Change the time of year the department can make adjustments for inflation from January to July each year.
- (2) Specify that the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, rather than the general Consumer Price Index, be used for inflation adjustments by the department.
- (3) Authorizes the department to make adjustments using the percentage increase over the period of time since the last adjustment or change to the fee, rather than the annual percentage increase.
- (4) Add bear hunting license privileges to those privileges included with the purchase of resident lifetime hunting licenses and resident lifetime hunting and fishing licenses, contingent upon the passage of HB 684.
- (5) Add language on effectiveness to provide that:

- (a) If HB 684 of the 2024 Regular Session establishing a bear hunting license passes, Section 1 of the bill that does not incorporate bear hunting privileges will not take effect.
- (b) If HB 684 of the 2024 Regular Session establishing a bear hunting license fails, Section 2 of the bill which incorporates references to bear privileges will not take effect.

Representative Riser offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Carrier, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, Kerner, LaCombe, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, Riser, and Zeringue voted yea.

Cole Garrett, LDWF, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 400.

Blake Canfield, DNR, no address provided, spoke for information only on HB 400.

Representative Riser offered a motion to report House Bill No. 400 with amendments, to which Representative Mack objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and House Bill No. 400 was reported with amendments by a vote of 11 yeas and 3 nays. Representatives Geymann, Bryant, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, Kerner, LaCombe, Jacob Landry, Orgeron, Riser, and Zeringue voted yea. Representatives Carrier, Mack, and McCormick voted nay.

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

House Bill No. 540 by Representative Geymann

Representative Geymann presented House Bill No. 540, which provides for eligibility of charter boat fishing guides for the Fisherman's Gear Compensation Fund.

Daryn Bovard, Louisiana Charter Boat Association, 506 Spanish Town Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke in support of House Bill No. 540.

Richard Fisher, Louisiana Charter Boat Association, 4409 Meadowdale Street, no city, state or zip code provided, spoke in support of House Bill No. 540.

Cole Garrett, LDWF, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 540.

Blake Canfield, DENR, 617 N. 3rd Street, 12th Floor, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 540.

Representative Dewitt offered a motion to report House Bill No. 540 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 540 was reported favorably by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, Kerner, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, Riser, and Zeringue voted yea.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

INTRODUCTION OF COMMITTEE STAFF

Representative Geymann introduced the committee staff.

DISCUSSION OF ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Purpose of the Committee

Robin Stalder, attorney for the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment explained the purpose of the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment.

Committee Jurisdiction

Benjamin Westra, attorney for the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment explained the jurisdiction of the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment.

Consideration and adoption of 2023 Regular Session committee minutes

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the 2023 Regular Session dated April 20, April 26, May 2, May 10, May 17, May 24, and May 31 were presented to the committee for approval. Representative Mack offered a motion to approve the minutes. Without objection, the minutes were approved by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Bryant, Carrier, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, Kerner, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, and Zeringue voted yea.

PRESENTATIONS

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries

Madison Sheehan, LDWF, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, spoke for information only, introduced her staff, and gave a brief overview of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

Tyler M. Bosworth, LDWF, 2000 Quail Drive, no city, state, or zip code provided, spoke for information only.

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

The Nature Conservancy

Karen Gautreaux, The Nature Conservancy, P.O. Box 4025, Baton Rouge, LA, no zip code provided, spoke for information only, gave an overview of The Nature Conservancy, and provided a handout, Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records.

Louisiana Wildlife Federation

Rebecca Triche, Louisiana Wildlife Federation, P.O. Box 65239, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, spoke for information only, and gave an overview of the Louisiana Wildlife Federation.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Jacob Landry offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, Riser, and Zeringue voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:57 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair Brett F. Geymann

House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment

Date adopted: