

## **House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment**

Minutes of Meeting  
2024 Regular Session  
March 26, 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 9:01 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:**

Angela McKnight, sergeant at arms

**III. DISCUSSION OF LEGISLATION****Senate Bill No. 65 by Senator Hensgens**

Senator Hensgens presented Senate Bill No. 65, which re-creates Dept. of Energy and Natural Resources.

Blake Canfield, LDENR, 617 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on Senate Bill No. 65.

Dustin Davidson, LDENR, 617 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on Senate Bill No. 65.

Representative Dewitt offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 65 favorably. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 65 was reported favorably by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Carrier, Coates, Dewitt, Kerner, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, Riser, and Zeringue voted yea.

**House Bill No. 748 by Representative Domangue**

Representative Domangue presented House Bill No. 748, which provides relative to imported seafood safety fees.

Sal Piazza, Piazza's Seafood World, 205 James Drive, St. Rose, LA, no zip code provided, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 748.

Representative Orgeron offered a motion to report House Bill No. 748 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 748 was reported favorably by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Bryant, Carrier, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, Kerner, LaCombe, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, Riser, and Zeringue voted yea.

**House Bill No. 298 by Representative McMahan**

Representative McMahan presented House Bill No. 298, which provides for the transfer of certain state property in Webster Parish.

Cheston Hill, DOA/OSL, 1201 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, no city, state, or zip code provided, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 298.

Representative Geymann offered amendments to:

- (1) Add an additional authorization for the commissioner of administration to transfer a certain tract of land in Webster Parish to Dale Farrar Furniss.
- (2) Add a property description.
- (3) Provide for the reservation of mineral rights to the state.
- (4) Make a technical change.

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

Representative McCormick offered a motion to report House Bill No. 298 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 298 was reported with amendments by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Bryant, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, Kerner, LaCombe, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, Riser, and Zeringue voted yea.

#### **House Bill No. 654 by Representative Hilferty**

Representative Hilferty presented House Bill No. 654, which provides relative to the authorized uses and lease of certain public property in Orleans and Jefferson Parish.

Charles Marsala, West End Lakeshore Park Civic Assoc., 233 N. Roadway, New Orleans, LA, 70124, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 654, provided a presentation to the committee, and distributed a handout, Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records.

Representative Zeringue offered a motion to report House Bill No. 654 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 654 was reported favorably by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Orgeron, Bryant, Carrier, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, C. Travis Johnson, Kerner, LaCombe, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Riser, 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 Concurrent Resolution No. 9 by Representative Kerner**

Representative Kerner presented House Concurrent Resolution No. 9, which memorializes Congress to impose a quota or tariff on imported shrimp, crab meat, and crawfish and to enact a buy plan for domestic shrimp, crab meat, and crawfish.

Representative Orgeron offered a motion to report House Concurrent Resolution No. 9 favorably. Without objection, House Concurrent Resolution No. 9 was reported favorably by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Carrier, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, C. Travis Johnson, Kerner, LaCombe, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, Riser, 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 Concurrent Resolution No. 10 by Representative Kerner**

Representative Kerner presented House Concurrent Resolution No. 10, which memorializes Congress to compel the United States Food and Drug Administration to fulfill its duties regarding inspection and testing of imported seafood.

Representative Zeringue offered a motion to report House Concurrent Resolution No. 10 favorably. Without objection, House Concurrent Resolution No. 10 was reported favorably by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Carrier, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, C. Travis Johnson, Kerner, LaCombe, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, Riser, 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. 676 by Representative Kerner**

Representative Kerner presented House Bill No. 676, which establishes a seafood importer license for wholesale/retail dealers and retail dealers.

Cole Garrett, LDWF, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 676.

Representative Kerner offered amendments to make proposed law applicable to dealers that import shrimp, crawfish, or crabs specifically, rather than to dealers that import any seafood. Representative Kerner offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Bryant, Carrier, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, Kerner, LaCombe, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, Riser, and Zeringue voted yea.

Representative Zeringue offered a motion to report House Bill No. 676 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 676 was reported with amendments by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Bryant, Carrier, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, Kerner, LaCombe, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, Riser, and Zeringue voted yea.

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

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 676 pursuant to House Rule 14.33.

### **House Bill No. 543 by Representative Zeringue**

Representative Zeringue presented House Bill No. 543, which provides relative to saltwater and charter fishing licenses and fees.

Representative Geymann offered amendments to:

- (1) Make technical changes.
- (2) Change the Charter Boat Fishing Fund in the Conservation Fund to the Charter Boat Fishing Escrow Account.
- (3) Specify that "charter promotion fees" collected under R.S. 56:302.9 and 3001 are deposited into the escrow account.
- (4) Remove the responsibility of the Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries from administering the Charter Boat Fishing Escrow Account and require that the monies in the escrow account be used by the Louisiana Charter Boat Association directly.
- (5) Remove the dedication of 10% of all annual charter guide license fees collected to the Charter Boat Fishing Fund, and instead specify that all revenue from charter guide licenses, except charter promotion fees, be deposited into the Conservation Fund.
- (6) Correct a reference to the fishing license required by a nonresident fishing with a charter guide from a saltwater fishing license to an appropriate fishing license under R.S. 56:3001(B).
- (7) Add the term "charter promotion fee" to an existing \$500 fee paid by nonresident charter boat fishing guides that is currently dedicated to the Charter Boat Fishing Guide Fund, and change the dedication from the Charter Boat Fishing Fund to the Charter Boat Fishing Escrow Account.

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, 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. 543.

Representative Kerner offered a motion to report House Bill No. 543 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 543 was reported with amendments by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Carrier, Coates, Dewitt, C. Travis Johnson, Kerner, LaCombe, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, Riser, 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. 661 by Representative Bryant**

Representative Bryant presented House Bill No. 661, which provides relative to charter boat fishing guide licensing.

Representative Bryant offered amendments to:

- (1) Make technical changes.
- (2) Remove requirement for freshwater charter fishing guides to obtain a United States Coast Guard captain's license.
- (3) Reinstate language in current law requiring the Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries to provide written notification of freshwater charter fishing guides that they may be subject to additional legal requirements, including the requirement to obtain a U.S. Coast Guard captain's license.
- (4) Change the insurance requirement for charter fishing guides from liability insurance to commercial marine insurance.

Representative Bryant 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, Bryant, Carrier, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, Kerner, LaCombe, Jacob Landry, Mack, Orgeron, and Zeringue voted yea.

Daryn Bovard, LA Charter Boat Assoc., 506 Spanish Town Road., Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke in support of House Bill No. 661.

Gloria Thompson, Freshwater Guides - LTD Guide Service, 13552 Texas Highway, Many, LA 71449, spoke in support of House Bill No. 661.

Richard Fischer, Louisiana Charter Boat Association, 4404 Meadowdale Street, Metairie, LA 70009, spoke in support of House Bill No. 661.

Representative Bryant offered a motion to report House Bill No. 661 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 661 was reported with amendments by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Bryant, Carrier, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, C. Travis Johnson, Kerner, LaCombe, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, Riser, and Zeringue voted yea.

#### **House Concurrent Resolution No. 4 by Representative Boyer**

Representative Boyer presented House Concurrent Resolution No. 4, which suspends requirements for record keeping regarding wild-caught freshwater fish.

Representative Geymann offered an amendment to make a technical change. Representative Geymann offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendment. Without objection, the amendment was adopted by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Bryant, Carrier, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, C. Travis Johnson, Kerner, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, Riser, and Zeringue voted yea.

Jody Meche, Louisiana Crawfish Producers Association - West, P.O. Box 694, Henderson, LA 70517, spoke in support of House Concurrent Resolution No. 4.

Cole Garrett, LDWF, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, spoke for information only on House Concurrent Resolution No. 4.

Representative Zeringue offered a motion to voluntarily defer action on House Concurrent Resolution No. 4. Without objection, action on House Concurrent Resolution No. 4 was voluntarily deferred by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Carrier, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, C. Travis Johnson, LaCombe, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, and Zeringue voted yea.

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

#### **IV. OTHER BUSINESS**

##### **PRESENTATION**

##### **Office of State Lands**

Cheston Hill, DOA/OSL, 1201 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, no city, state, or zip code provided, spoke for information only, and gave an overview of the Division of Administration Office of State Lands.

#### **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 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Bryant, Carrier, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, C. Travis Johnson, LaCombe, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, and Zeringue voted yea. The meeting was adjourned at 12:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Brett F. Geymann  
House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment

Date adopted: