

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

Minutes of Meeting  
2024 Regular Session  
March 27, 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. 273 by Senator Hensgens**

Senator Hensgens presented Senate Bill No. 273, which provides for bait shrimp.

Representative Geymann offered amendments to specify that the type of permit provided by the commission under present law is the special bait dealers permit. Representative Geymann offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted 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.

Cole Garrett, LDWF, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, spoke for information only on Senate Bill No. 273.

Representative Dewitt offered a motion to report Senate Bill No. 273 with amendments. Without objection, Senate Bill No. 273 was reported with amendments 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. 349 by Representative McCormick**

Representative McCormick presented House Bill No. 349, which removes the need for a hunting license for the taking of outlaw quadrupeds, nutria, and beavers.

Cole Garrett, LDWF, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 349.

Major Rick Owens, LDWF Enforcement, no address provided, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 349.

Mike Ranatza, LA Sheriff's Assn., 1175 Nicholson Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 349.

Kevin Hayes, LA Landowner's Association, 412 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 349.

Representative Geymann offered amendments to reinstate current law. Representative Geymann 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.

Rebecca Triche, Louisiana Wildlife Federation, 8980 Bluebonnet Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70810, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 349.

Representative McCormick offered a motion to report House Bill No. 349 with amendments, to which Representative Zeringue objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and the motion failed to pass by a vote of 4 yeas, 8 nays, and 1 abstention. Representatives Carrier, Chassion, Jacob Landry, and McCormick voted yea. Representatives Orgeron, Coates, Dewitt, Kerner, LaCombe, Mack, Riser, and Zeringue voted nay. Representative Geymann abstained.

Witness cards submitted by individuals that did not speak are as follows: 3 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee record.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 349 pursuant to House Rule 14.33.

#### **House Bill No. 684 by Representative Riser**

Representative Riser presented House Bill No. 684, which provides relative to bear hunting.

Cole Garrett, LDWF, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 684.

*Representative Orgeron in the chair.*

Representative LaCombe offered a motion to report House Bill No. 684 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 684 was reported favorably by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Orgeron, Bryant, Carrier, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, Kerner, LaCombe, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Riser, and Zeringue voted yea.

*Representative Geymann in the chair.*

#### **House Bill No. 532 by Representative Fontenot**

On behalf of Representative Fontenot, Cole Garrett, LDWF, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, presented House Bill No. 532, which provides relative to the seizure of animals by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

Major Rick Owens, LDWF Enforcement, no address provided, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 532.

Representative Dewitt offered a motion to report House Bill No. 532 favorably, to which Representative McCormick objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and House Bill No. 532 was reported favorably by a vote of 10 yeas, 1 nay, and 1 abstention. Representatives Bryant, Carrier, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, Kerner, Jacob Landry, Mack, Orgeron, and Zeringue voted yea. Representative McCormick voted nay. Representative Geymann abstained.

### **House Concurrent Resolution No. 6 by Representative Ventrella**

Representative Ventrella presented House Concurrent Resolution No. 6, which provides relative to Wildlife Rehabilitation Program rules.

Major Rick Owens, no address provided, spoke for information only on House Concurrent Resolution No. 6.

Representative Geymann offered amendments to:

- (1) Establish an exemption to the Wildlife Rehabilitation Program Permit, in which an individual may possess in captivity sick, injured, or orphaned wildlife if they have satisfied the course requirements of the program and have a licensed veterinarian certify that the animal is medically nonreleasable. Further specifies that these animals are limited to squirrel, skunk, opossum, racoon, rabbit, or chipmunk, with possession limited to one animal per individual. Individuals will also be strictly liable for any damages to persons or property caused by the animal.
- (2) Make a technical change.

Representative Geymann offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted 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.

Cole Garrett, LDWF, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, spoke for information only on House Concurrent Resolution No. 6.

Dr. James M. LaCour, LA Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries, P.O. Box 98000, Baton Rouge, LA 70898, spoke for information only on House Concurrent Resolution No. 6.

Representative Riser offered amendments to:

- (1) Require at least one department approved course to be readily available online, which may require completion of an interactive test. Further require the department post approved courses on its website by January 1, 2025. Additionally provide that any wildlife rehabilitation course developed or administered by the LDWF are subject to a fee of \$50.
- (2) Restore provisions related to submission of a Statement of Veterinary Support.
- (3) Provide that permitted facilities may be subject to inspection by the LDWF upon sufficient notice to the WRP applicant.
- (4) Restore provisions related to submission of a written request for extension of possession of an animal after 120 days.
- (5) Make a technical change.

Representative Riser 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, C. Travis Johnson, Kerner, LaCombe, Jacob Landry, Mack, Orgeron, Riser, and Zeringue voted yea.

Rhonda Dendy, 106 Jim Price Road, Clinton, LA 70722, spoke in support of House Concurrent Resolution No. 6.

Shane Dedon, 12909 Big Oak Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70818, spoke in support of House Concurrent Resolution No. 6.

Courtney Middleton, 10411 McCullough Road, Zachary, LA 70791, spoke in support of House Concurrent Resolution No. 6.

Letitia Labbie, Acadiana Wildlife, 502 Mermentau Road, Youngsville, LA 70592, spoke in opposition to House Concurrent Resolution No. 6.

Tisha Raiford, Geaux Wild Rehab, 42440 S. Range Road, Hammond, LA 70403, spoke in opposition to House Concurrent Resolution No. 6.

Tama Bray, Silent Voices Wildlife Rehabilitation, 508 Jr. Lane, Kentwood, LA 70444, spoke in opposition of House Concurrent Resolution No. 6.

Skye Arceneaux, Tails of Nature, 65633 Highway 1061, Kentwood, LA no zip code provided, spoke in opposition to House Concurrent Resolution No. 6.

Representative Geymann offered a motion to report House Concurrent Resolution No. 6 with amendments. Without objection, House Concurrent Resolution No. 6 was reported with amendments by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, Kerner, LaCombe, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, Riser, and Zeringue voted yea.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Concurrent Resolution No. 6 pursuant to House Rule 14.33.

#### **House Bill No. 409 by Representative Firment**

Representative Firment presented House Bill No. 409, which provides relative to harassment of hunters, trappers, and fishermen on lands and waters managed by the state.

Representative Geymann offered amendments to remove language specifically including the Northwest Louisiana Game and Fish Preserve within state-managed lands and waters. 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, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, Kerner, LaCombe, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, Riser, and Zeringue voted yea.

Representative Geymann offered a motion to report House Bill No. 409 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 409 was reported with amendments by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, Kerner, LaCombe, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, Riser, and Zeringue voted yea.

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

There was no other business.

#### **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 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Geymann, Chassion, Coates, Dewitt, Kerner, LaCombe, Jacob Landry, Mack, McCormick, Orgeron, Riser, and Zeringue voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Date adopted: