

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 358

BY REPRESENTATIVE PHELPS

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Department of Transportation and Development, through the department's District 4 commissioner, to engage in communication with certain railroad companies, including but not limited to Kansas City Southern Railway Company and Union Pacific Railroad to address abandoned and blighted railroads and associated structures in certain parishes in Louisiana.

WHEREAS, in Northwest Louisiana, the railroad history features several historically significant abandoned lines and corridors, including but not limited to Kansas City Southern Railway Company, Union Pacific Railroad, Texas and Pacific Railway Company, the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad Company, and the Louisiana and Arkansas Railway; and

WHEREAS, abandoned and blighted railroad lines pose significant safety, environmental, and public health hazards; and

WHEREAS, rotting timber, protruding spikes, and uneven tracks create severe tripping hazards and can damage car tires or disrupt vehicles at crossing points; and

WHEREAS, old wooden railroad ties are heavily treated with creosote, a pesticide and fungicide, that can ooze from the wood and leach into the soil and local watersheds; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the public to address abandoned and blighted railroads in the state of Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, communication with these railroad commissions can provide a solution to address abandoned and blighted railroads in the parishes of Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Claiborne, Desoto, Red River, and Webster.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Department of Transportation and Development, through the department's District 4 commissioner, to engage in communication and strategize the removal or remediation of certain railroads with the

referenced railroad companies to address abandoned and blighted railroads and associated structures in the listed Northwestern Louisiana parishes.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Transportation and Development, District 4 commissioner, shall consult and communicate with parish or city governing authorities in an effort to resolve the problem with abandoned and blighted railroads.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Transportation and Development, District 4 commissioner, shall maintain and provide a contact list of the referenced railroad companies to the listed parishes.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department shall submit a written report to the House Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works prior to January 1, 2027, that provides details on discussions and the intent of the railroads to resolve the abandoned and blighted railroads and associated structures in the listed Northwestern Louisiana parishes.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Department of Transportation and Development.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES