

2016 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 115

BY REPRESENTATIVE ROBBY CARTER

WATER/RESOURCES: Urges and requests the office of conservation to study the effects of ground water withdrawals from the Southern Hills Aquifer System

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the commissioner of conservation to study the effects of ground water
3 withdrawals on the sustainability of the Southern Hills Aquifer System and on the
4 water supplies of parishes currently relying on that ground water and to report those
5 findings to the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment and the
6 Senate Committee on Environmental Quality.

7 WHEREAS, the Southern Hills Aquifer System is a system of several aquifers
8 underlying the parishes of East and West Baton Rouge, Pointe Coupee, East and West
9 Feliciana, and St. Helena with ten of those north of a fault line that bisects East Baton Rouge
10 Parish; and

11 WHEREAS, the Southern Hills Aquifer System is the major source of drinking water
12 for ten parishes in and surrounding the Capital Area Region and there are numerous
13 industrial facilities that withdraw potable water from the aquifer system for their industrial
14 processes; and

15 WHEREAS, there has long been concern about the viability, sustainability, and
16 health of the Southern Hills Aquifer System; even as long ago as the early 1960s, there were
17 concerns about saltwater being drawn from the southern portions of the system below the
18 fault line into the freshwater portions of the aquifer north of the fault line; and

19 WHEREAS, the concern about the sustainability of the aquifer system has been
20 growing and has resulted in many activities, discussions, studies, and public hearings
21 culminating in the July 2013 release by the United States Geological Survey (USGS) of their

1 "Simulation of Groundwater Flow in the '1,500-foot' Sand and the '2,000-foot' Sand and
2 Movement of Saltwater in the '2,000-foot' Sand of the Baton Rouge Area, Louisiana" report;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, according to the abstract of that report, "Groundwater withdrawals have
5 caused saltwater to encroach into freshwater-bearing aquifers beneath Baton Rouge,
6 Louisiana. Groundwater investigations in the 1960s identified a freshwater-saltwater
7 interface located at the Baton Rouge Fault, across which abrupt changes in water levels
8 occur."

9 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
10 urge and request the commissioner of conservation to study the effects of the ground water
11 withdrawals on the sustainability of the Southern Hills Aquifer System and on the water
12 supplies and water levels, including the lowering of the water table, of parishes currently
13 relying on that ground water and to report those findings to the House Committee on Natural
14 Resources and Environment and the Senate Committee on Environmental Quality on or
15 before March 1, 2017.

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted
17 to the commissioner of conservation.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HCR 115 Original

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Urges and requests the commissioner of conservation to study the effects of the ground water withdrawals on the sustainability of the Southern Hills Aquifer System and on the water supplies and levels of parishes currently relying on that ground water and to report those findings to the oversight committees on or before March 1, 2017.