

2017 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 219

BY SENATOR HEWITT

LEGIS POWERS/FUNCTIONS. Creates the Lower Pearl River Basin task force to study the conditions, needs, issues, and funding relative to flood protection and preservation of the Lower Pearl River Basin, and to recommend any action or legislation that the task force deems necessary or appropriate.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To create and provide for the Lower Pearl River Basin task force to study the conditions,
3 needs, issues, and funding relative to the flood protection and preservation of the
4 Lower Pearl River Basin and to recommend any action or legislation that the
5 commission deems necessary or appropriate.

6 WHEREAS, the state of Louisiana has been endowed with natural beauty that draws
7 countless sportsmen and tourists every year and should expend the necessary resources to
8 preserve its most important sanctuaries; and

9 WHEREAS, the Lower Pearl River Basin is located in east-central and southwest
10 Mississippi and in the southeastern part of Louisiana, and drains an area of seven hundred
11 sixty square miles; and

12 WHEREAS, the basin contains one of the least-altered and pristine swamps in the
13 United States of America, covering an area of over seventy thousand acres, and supports
14 nearly one hundred forty types of fish and forty species of freshwater mussels, making it one
15 of the most species-rich river systems in the world; and

16 WHEREAS, in an effort to preserve this valued and treasured ecosystem, a
17 comprehensive plan should be created and instituted that will provide the financial, political,
18 and scientific resources necessary to keep the Lower Pearl River Basin ecosystem in its

1 pristine and natural state and should be based on the latest scientific, biological,
2 hydrological, and geological data; and

3 WHEREAS, areas adjacent to the Pearl River and its tributaries have experienced a
4 higher frequency of flooding in recent years; and

5 WHEREAS, activities in the state of Mississippi with regard to the portion of the
6 Pearl River within its borders may affect the flow and level of the river in Louisiana; and

7 WHEREAS, the flood protection and efficient use of this important resource will
8 depend on a comprehensive plan.

9 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana
10 does hereby create the Lower Pearl River Basin task force to study and make
11 recommendations to the legislature and federal agencies on the development of a long-term
12 comprehensive master plan to address flood control and drainage issues, while preserving
13 the Lower Pearl River Basin ecosystem.

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force created shall consist of the
15 following nine members:

16 (1) One member of the Senate appointed by the president, whom shall serve as
17 chairperson.

18 (2) One member of the House of Representatives, appointed by the speaker.

19 (3) The secretary of the Department of Natural Resources, or his designee.

20 (4) The secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, or his designee.

21 (5) The secretary of the Department of Environmental Quality, or his designee.

22 (6) The secretary of the Department of Transportation and Development, or his
23 designee.

24 (7) The executive director of the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, or his
25 designee.

26 (8) The parish president of Washington Parish, or his designee.

27 (9) The parish president of St. Tammany Parish, or his designee.

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that such study should focus on the area of
29 protection, riverine flooding, drainage, the potential creation of an authority to manage the
30 area, financing for such an authority, long-term projects for the preservation and

1 maintenance of the area, and any future needs of the area.

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the task force shall serve
3 without compensation, except per diem or expense reimbursement to which they may be
4 individually entitled as members of their respective constituent organization.

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force may conduct such meetings at
6 such times as it may deem necessary or convenient to enable it to exercise fully and
7 effectively its powers, perform its duties, and accomplish the objectives and purposes of this
8 Resolution.

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall consider the feasibility of
10 creating a multi-state compact with the state of Mississippi, a development district, or
11 management authority within the state of Louisiana.

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall make a report of its findings
13 and recommendations, with suggestions for proposed legislation, if any, to the president of
14 the Senate by February 1, 2018.

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if the task force deems it necessary to continue
16 its study, it may do so until the task force terminates on February 1, 2019.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Alan Miller.

SR 219 Original

DIGEST
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