

2023 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 81

BY REPRESENTATIVE ECHOLS

AGRICULTURE: Establishes the ArkLaMiss Timber and Bioinnovation Corridor Commission

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To establish the ArkLaMiss Timber and Bioinnovation Corridor Commission to consider
3 and make recommendations regarding the creation of an ArkLaMiss Timber and
4 Bioinnovation Corridor, a multistate wood basket collaborative between Arkansas,
5 Louisiana, Mississippi, and to serve as the Louisiana delegation for such
6 collaborative when it is established.

7 WHEREAS, the economic impacts of forestry and related industries to the states of
8 Louisiana, Arkansas, and Mississippi cannot be overstated; and

9 WHEREAS, forestry in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi provides one of the
10 largest sources of employment for each state, supporting hundreds of primary and secondary
11 wood-using industries from harvest and transportation to manufacturing and technological
12 innovation, in addition to providing income for public and private landowners and millions
13 of dollars in severance, local, and state taxes each year; and

14 WHEREAS, timber alone is used to manufacture building materials, paper, chemical
15 products, furniture, fixtures, and many other products used in daily life, while timber
16 manufacturing residues are used to produce mulch, bedding, fuel, and other products, and
17 the industry supports the operation of sawmills, panel plants, paper and pulp mills, chip
18 mills, peeling plants, treatment facilities, and secondary manufacturers such as furniture
19 companies, millwork, and cabinet manufacturers; and

20 WHEREAS, in addition, forest biomass is a renewable and widely available
21 byproduct of the industry that has long been used to generate thermal energy and has seen

1 increasing use as feedstock for the production of bioenergy, biofuels, and other bioproducts;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, the compression of biomass into pellets or chips is an example of
4 bioinnovation that has allowed for cleaner burning and more cost effective transportation of
5 biofuels; and

6 WHEREAS, if considered together as one ArkLaMiss wood basket, the forest
7 management, harvest schedules, transportation, manufacturing operations, and bioinnovation
8 centers of southeast Arkansas, northeast Louisiana, and western Mississippi could be
9 optimized to respond more efficiently to natural threats and the global market; and

10 WHEREAS, an ArkLaMiss Timber and Bioinnovation Corridor, managed through
11 commissions established in each state, could provide such optimization for the benefit of
12 economic development and sustainability of the forestry and related industries in each state;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, optimization of the ArkLaMiss wood basket could also position the
15 ArkLaMiss Timber and Bioinnovation Corridor as a world leader in future supply chain
16 reliability and global energy security; and

17 WHEREAS, given the importance of these industries and the complexity of forming
18 a multistate collaborative, it is therefore in the state's interest that the legislature should
19 create a commission to consider the creation of an ArkLaMiss Timber and Bioinnovation
20 Corridor and related issues and report its findings and recommendations to the legislature.

21 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
22 establish the ArkLaMiss Timber and Bioinnovation Corridor Commission to study and make
23 recommendations regarding the creation of an ArkLaMiss Timber and Bioinnovation
24 Corridor.

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, at a minimum, the commission shall consider
26 and make recommendations regarding the following:

27 (1) Legal and legislative requirements to establish the ArkLaMiss Timber and
28 Bioinnovation Corridor.

29 (2) Structure and governance of the ArkLaMiss Timber and Bioinnovation Corridor.

1 (3) The powers, duties, and decision-making process for and among state
2 commissions for the ArkLaMiss Timber and Bioinnovation Corridor.

3 (4) The main goals and objectives of the state commissions individually and acting
4 collectively for ArkLaMiss Timber and Bioinnovation Corridor.

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission may also consider any other
6 matter relevant to the ArkLaMiss Timber and Bioinnovation Corridor, including but not
7 limited to (1) improvements to infrastructure between the three states that may help
8 maximize opportunities; (2) rural development opportunities for a collective ArkLaMiss
9 wood basket; (3) identification of stakeholders, including industry, governmental, trade,
10 advocacy, and biotech representatives that may be able to contribute to policy making; (4)
11 technological advancements in the industry that could be capitalized on through the
12 multistate collaborative.

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the commission are encouraged
14 to collaborate with their counterparts in Arkansas and Mississippi as appropriate to further
15 the goals of the commission.

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall be composed of the
17 following members:

18 (1) One member from the Louisiana Department of Transportation and
19 Development, to be appointed by the secretary.

20 (2) One member from Louisiana Economic Development appointed by the
21 secretary.

22 (3) One member from the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry
23 appointed by the commissioner.

24 (4) The state representative for House District 14.

25 (5) Two members from the Louisiana House of Representatives appointed by the
26 speaker.

27 (6) Two members from the Louisiana Senate appointed by the president.

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that members of the commission shall serve without
29 compensation, except per diem or expense reimbursement to which they may individually
30 be entitled as members of their constituent organizations.

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each appointing authority shall submit the names
2 of their appointments to the state representative for House District No. 14 no later than July
3 31, 2023.

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall convene its first meeting
5 no later than September 1, 2023, at the call of the state representative representing House
6 District No. 14.

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the commission shall elect a
8 chairman and other officers as it deems appropriate at the first meeting.

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall submit a report of its
10 findings and recommendations on or before February 1, 2024, to the Legislature of
11 Louisiana and the David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library.

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
13 secretary of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, the secretary of
14 Louisiana Economic Development, the commissioner of the Louisiana Department of
15 Agriculture and Forestry, the speaker of the Louisiana House of Representatives, and the
16 president of the Louisiana Senate.

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 81 Engrossed

2023 Regular Session

Echols

Establishes the ArkLaMiss Timber and Bioinnovation Corridor Commission to consider and make recommendations regarding the creation of an ArkLaMiss Timber and Bioinnovation Corridor, a multistate wood basket collaborative between Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and to serve as the La. delegation for such collaborative when it is established.

Requires the commission to study and make recommendations regarding the following:

- (1) Legal and legislative requirements to establish the ArkLaMiss Timber and Bioinnovation Corridor.
- (2) Structure and governance of the ArkLaMiss Timber and Bioinnovation Corridor;
- (3) The powers, duties, and decision-making process for and among state commissions for the ArkLaMiss Timber and Bioinnovation Corridor.
- (4) The main goals and objectives of the state commissions individually and acting collectively for ArkLaMiss Timber and Bioinnovation Corridor.

The commission may also consider any relevant matter, including the following:

- (1) Improvements to infrastructure between the three states that may help maximize opportunities.
- (2) Rural development opportunities for a collective ArkLaMiss wood basket.
- (3) Identification of stakeholders, including industry, governmental, trade, advocacy, and biotech representatives that may be able to contribute to policy making.
- (4) Technological advancements in the industry that could be capitalized on through the multistate collaborative.

The commission is to be composed of the following members:

- (1) One member from the La. Department of Transportation and Development, to be appointed by the secretary.
- (2) One member from La. Economic Development appointed by the secretary.
- (3) One member from the La. Department of Agriculture and Forestry appointed by the commissioner.
- (4) The state representative for House District 14.
- (5) Two members from the La. House of Representatives appointed by the speaker.
- (6) Two members from the La. Senate appointed by the president.

The commission is required to convene its first meeting no later than Sept. 1, 2023, and it must submit a report of its findings and recommendations by Feb. 1, 2024.