

2023 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 259

BY REPRESENTATIVE DUBUISSON

BOATS/SHIPS/VESSELS: Urges and requests the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to collaborate with local stakeholders to identify solutions for the regulation of airboats on Bayou Liberty

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to collaborate with the St.
3 Tammany Parish administration, the St. Tammany Parish Sheriff's Office, and the
4 Bayou Liberty Association to identify solutions for the regulation of airboats on
5 Bayou Liberty.

6 WHEREAS, Bayou Liberty is a narrow, serene waterway in St. Tammany Parish
7 lined with private property and homes; and

8 WHEREAS, the bayou is part of the Louisiana Natural and Scenic Rivers Program,
9 which means that its free-flowing condition and shorelines covered by natural vegetation are
10 subject to special restrictions in place to preserve, protect, and enhance its natural qualities;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, for several years tourists visiting the area have been bringing in and
13 using airboats on Bayou Liberty in a manner that threatens the natural tranquility and scenic
14 and aesthetic qualities of the bayou and causes problems for the residents along the bayou;
15 and

16 WHEREAS, airboats are powered by an elevated, high horsepower motor with a
17 large air propeller that makes them much louder than traditional boat motors; and

18 WHEREAS, in addition to noise pollution these airboats are not easily maneuverable
19 and can be destructive to the marsh; and

1 WHEREAS, the St. Tammany Parish council has passed ordinances to regulate the
2 speed of airboats and the distance they must keep from public structures and private
3 residences; and

4 WHEREAS, there is also an ordinance prohibiting unreasonably loud and intrusive
5 noises; and

6 WHEREAS, when law enforcement is contacted, they are often unable to arrive at
7 the scene in time to enforce such laws; and

8 WHEREAS, these local ordinances have not proven effective at regulating the use
9 of airboats on the bayou; and

10 WHEREAS, the state retains the exclusive authority to prohibit airboats on navigable
11 waterways; and

12 WHEREAS, the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, in its capacity as the steward
13 of scenic rivers, wildlife, and fisheries and as a law enforcement agency with jurisdiction
14 over navigational matters and boating safety, as well as local law enforcement agencies,
15 local government agencies, and local advocates all have a stake in these matters and should
16 work together to find solutions.

17 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the
18 Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Department of Wildlife and
19 Fisheries to collaborate with the St. Tammany Parish administration, the St. Tammany
20 Parish Sheriff's Office, and the Bayou Liberty Association to identify solutions for the
21 regulation of airboats on Bayou Liberty.

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
23 secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, the St. Tammany Parish President,
24 the St. Tammany Parish Sheriff, and the president of the Bayou Liberty Association.

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)]

Urges and requests the Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries to collaborate with the St. Tammany Parish administration, the St. Tammany Parish Sheriff's Office, and the Bayou Liberty Association to identify solutions for the regulation of airboats on Bayou Liberty.