

2025 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 588

BY REPRESENTATIVES MENA AND BOYD

AN ACT

To amend and reenact R.S. 48:1655(A)(1)(c)(ii) and (2) and (I)(1) and (2), 1656(23), and 1656.1(B)(3), (C)(2) through (5), (D), and (E) and to repeal R.S. 48:1656(24) through (26), relative to the Regional Transit Authority; to provide for the membership of the board of commissioners; to provide for certain powers and authority of the board; to require transit-specific training for members added to the board; to require a minimum of ten meetings per year for board members; to provide for voting and quorum; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 48:1655(A)(1)(c)(ii) and (2) and (I)(1) and (2), 1656(23), and 1656.1(B)(3), (C)(2) through (5), (D), and (E) are hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

§1655. Board of commissioners; membership; terms

A.(1) The board of commissioners of the authority shall be composed of three members from each participating parish appointed by the chief executive officer of that parish, subject to the approval of its governing authority, one member appointed by the New Orleans City Council, one member appointed from House District 102 by the state representative representing the district beginning on September 1, 2024, and this appointment shall rotate every four years thereafter between the member appointed from the house district and a member appointed from Senate District 7 by the state senator representing the district, and two members

1 appointed by the chief executive officer of the parish with the greatest percentage of
2 public transit revenue operating miles from recommendations of the legislative
3 delegation of that parish as follows:

4 * * *

5 (c)

6 * * *

7 (ii) If any participating parish opts out of the Regional Transit Authority
8 after August 1, 2024, the ~~mayor~~ chief executive officer of the parish or governing
9 authority shall have the power to appoint two new members to the board.

10 (2) Each member appointed by the chief executive officer of a parish shall
11 be domiciled within the parish. Further, each member appointed to the authority ~~by~~
12 ~~the parish legislator~~ shall possess the minimum transit expertise standards and
13 ~~required training and previous union experience~~ commit to completing at least two
14 hours of transit-specific training either before taking office or no later than one year
15 after the office is assumed. The transit minimum standards shall be established by
16 the board of commissioners by January 1, 2025, and shall then apply to all newly
17 appointed commissioners.

18 * * *

19 I.(1) The board shall hold at least ~~one meeting each month~~ ten meetings per
20 year. The secretary of the board shall give written notice and agenda ~~to each~~
21 ~~member of the board at least five days prior to any meeting~~. ~~The secretary shall be~~
22 ~~informed of any meeting so as to provide for his giving notice as above in~~ in
23 accordance with R.S. 42:19.

24 (2) In order to conduct any official meeting, a quorum is required. A
25 quorum shall consist of sufficient members present to constitute two-thirds of the
26 weighted vote, and at least one representative of a majority of the parishes
27 comprising the authority. A majority of the quorum present at a meeting may
28 exercise all the powers and perform all the duties of the board, except as otherwise
29 hereinafter provided or as limited by its bylaws. If there is only one parish
30 represented on the board of commissioners, a simple majority of the regular

membership is required to establish a quorum or to adopt a motion. Proxy voting shall not be permitted under any circumstances.

* * *

§1656. General powers

The authority shall have all powers necessary or convenient to accomplish the aforesaid purposes, including but not limited to the following:

* * *

(23) ~~The power to require quarterly reporting of the Regional Transit Authority funds and functioning.~~

~~(24) The power to establish and address situations where the Regional Transit Authority violates state and city laws and establish penalties.~~

~~(25) The power to establish an investigative committee for the following:
probe waste, bid rigging, abuse of employees, and labor law violations.~~

(26) Notwithstanding the provisions of any other law to the contrary, including the provisions of R.S. 45:161 et seq., the authority created herein and any entity contracted to manage or operate the authority shall not be deemed a "person" as defined in R.S. 45:162 or a "common carrier" as defined in R.S. 45:162, nor shall the authority or any entity contracted to manage or operate the authority be construed or interpreted to be such. Additionally, the authority and any entity contracted to manage or operate the authority shall not be deemed to be a common carrier or interpreted to be such by any court of this state in a suit for personal injury or property damage.

§1656.1. Regional Transit Authority Advisory Board; creation; composition;
powers

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B.

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1 (3) The advisory board shall be required to meet at least quarterly, and
2 present findings, recommendations, and any other relevant information to with the
3 board of commissioners at least once per year.

4 C. The advisory board shall be composed of twelve persons as follows:

5 * * *

6 (2) ~~A local member of the Amalgamated Transit Union who works for the~~
7 ~~Regional Transit Authority appointed by the president and business agent. One labor~~
8 representative from the Amalgamated Transit Union who works for the Regional
9 Transit Authority appointed by the union's president.

10 (3) One labor union representative from the International Brotherhood of
11 Electrical Workers, the United Labor Union, or any other labor union that is formed
12 in the future to represent Regional Transit Authority workers. This appointment
13 shall rotate every two years and the nomination and selection shall be decided by the
14 elected officers of these relevant Regional Transit Authority local labor unions.

15 ~~(3)~~(4) A member from Ride New Orleans appointed by the executive officer.

16 ~~(4)~~(5) The A representative appointed by the president of each of the
17 following ~~universities~~ educational institutions: Loyola University, Tulane
18 University, Xavier University, Dillard University, Southern University at New
19 Orleans, the University of New Orleans, ~~and~~ the University of Holy Cross, and
20 Delgado Community College.

21 ~~(5)~~ Two members appointed by the president of the Louisiana American
22 Federation of Labor and Congress of Louisiana Industrial Organizations.

23 D. All appointed members of the advisory board shall ~~receive~~ commit to
24 completing at least two hours of transit-specific training ~~in the duties,~~
25 ~~responsibilities, ethics, and substance of the positions held and two hours of training~~
26 ~~on labor and union relations best practices,~~ either before taking office or no later than
27 one year after the office is assumed. The minimum standards for transit-specific
28 training shall be established by the advisory board and shall apply to all newly
29 appointed members. All training shall be formally approved by the board and
30 ratified by each participating parish or city legislative body.

1 E. Any city or parish with appointments and representation on the Regional
2 Transit Authority board of commissioners shall have the authority to request an
3 internal audit of the Regional Transit Authority or, at its expense, hire a third party
4 to perform the audit. Any work hours by an employee of the authority that are
5 dedicated to support the third-party audit shall be reimbursed by the city or parish
6 requesting the third-party audit. All records and information requested in the audit
7 shall be provided in an expedited manner by the Regional Transit Authority. ~~A city~~
8 ~~or parish council may levy fines on the Regional Transit Authority.~~
9 Section 2. R.S. 48:1656(24) through (26) are hereby repealed in their entirety.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: _____