

1 samples from hundreds of wells across Louisiana and the Gulf Coast region, including
2 unique data not available in other state systems; and

3 WHEREAS, these collections are critical to understanding Louisiana's subsurface
4 geology and support a wide range of activities, including energy development, groundwater
5 management, environmental protection, geological hazard assessment, and academic
6 research; and

7 WHEREAS, recent activity and interest from industry, government, and academic
8 stakeholders highlight the continued and growing relevance of the repository and the existing
9 facility and associated systems present opportunities for modernization, including physical
10 infrastructure, storage capacity, digital cataloging, and public accessibility; and

11 WHEREAS, the Department of Conservation and Energy, created pursuant to R.S.
12 36:351, is responsible for the conservation, management, and development of water,
13 minerals, and other natural resources of the state, and exercises authority over matters
14 including the filing of well logs, electrical surveys, drilling records, and other subsurface
15 data; and

16 WHEREAS, R.S. 30:4(B) authorizes the secretary to collect data, make
17 investigations and inspections, examine properties, leases, papers, books, and records, and
18 provide for the keeping of records and making of reports and R.S. 30:4(C)(2) further
19 authorizes the secretary to require the making of reports showing the location of all oil and
20 gas wells and the filing of logs, electrical surveys, and other drilling records; and

21 WHEREAS, R.S. 44:1(B) establishes confidentiality periods for electrical well
22 surveys and other electric logs filed with the former office of conservation, including one
23 year for wells shallower than fifteen thousand feet and two years for wells fifteen thousand
24 feet deep or deeper, with extensions available upon demonstration of continued leasehold
25 interest, and these confidentiality periods, first established in the late 1970's, have not been
26 substantively revised to reflect current industry conditions, data technologies, or public
27 interest considerations; and

28 WHEREAS, R.S. 30:213(A)(2) provides that for any geophysical or geological
29 survey permit issued on or after July 1, 2004, the permit holder retains ownership of the data
30 gathered and is not required to submit such data to the state, although the State Mineral and

1 Energy Board and employees of the office of state resources are permitted to review it, and
2 this change from the prior submission requirement applicable to pre-2004 permits has
3 resulted in a significant gap in the state's holdings of seismic and geophysical data; and

4 WHEREAS, R.S. 44:18 provides that all geophysical and geological survey
5 information furnished to the State Mineral and Energy Board or the office of state resources
6 pursuant to R.S. 30:213 is confidential and exempt from public records laws and R.S.
7 30:209.1 further provides that information and data acquired by the board from geological
8 and geophysical surveys shall be confidential and available only to the board and the
9 secretary for official administration of publicly owned lands; and

10 WHEREAS, R.S. 30:212 provides that the State Mineral and Energy Board has
11 exclusive authority to grant permits to conduct geophysical and geological surveys on
12 state-owned lands, including water bottoms, with permits granted pursuant to rules
13 promulgated by the Department of Conservation and Energy; and

14 WHEREAS, existing statutes and regulations governing the filing of well logs,
15 electrical surveys, and drilling records do not specify requirements for digital or electronic
16 formats, and the absence of standardized digital submission requirements may impede
17 efforts to aggregate, digitize, and make accessible the state's subsurface data holdings,
18 particularly legacy data stored on obsolete media formats; and

19 WHEREAS, a substantial portion of the state's subsurface data exists in legacy
20 analog and digital formats, including tapes, disks, servers, microfilm, microfiche, and other
21 media, which present challenges for preservation, integration, and access; and

22 WHEREAS, no existing statute expressly establishes a framework for interagency
23 coordination or data-sharing between the offices of the Department of Conservation and
24 Energy and the Louisiana Geological Survey with respect to subsurface data, and the
25 establishment of such a framework may be necessary to avoid duplication of effort and to
26 ensure comprehensive data coverage; and

27 WHEREAS, a thorough subsurface data set would include, but not be limited to, Log
28 ASCII Standard (LAS) files, well logs, mud logs, drilling surveys, seismic data, unit orders,
29 unit contours, geologic units, geographic units, survey plats, and any and all data regardless
30 of original storage medium, whether analog or digital formats; and

1 WHEREAS, the legislature recognizes that maintaining, preserving, and enhancing
2 access to these materials is important to the state's long-term economic development,
3 scientific advancement, and resource management objectives; and

4 WHEREAS, the development of a robust and comprehensive data set of all
5 subsurface data collected to date will serve the public interest by supporting responsible
6 mineral resource development, environmental protection, geologic hazard assessment,
7 groundwater management, carbon storage siting, and informed land use planning; and

8 WHEREAS, the legislature desires to better understand the history, current status,
9 and future needs of the Well Log and Core Repository in order to inform potential future
10 investments and policy decisions; and

11 WHEREAS, a coordinated review of both the physical holdings of these agencies and
12 the applicable statutes, rules, and regulations governing the collection, retention, submission,
13 confidentiality, and public accessibility of such holdings is necessary and timely and would
14 assist the legislature in identifying any legislative action that may be appropriate to facilitate
15 the establishment of a comprehensive data set while balancing the legitimate interests of data
16 owners and the public.

17 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
18 urge and request the Department of Conservation and Energy to collaborate with the
19 Louisiana Geological Survey to review applicable statutes, rules, and regulations governing
20 the collection, retention, submission, and accessibility of subsurface geological data; identify
21 existing collections of subsurface data, the policies that govern them, and any needed
22 improvements to physical and intellectual access to the collections; and develop a proposal
23 for modernizing the collection, retention, and accessibility of the state's subsurface data.

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, in developing a proposal, the Department of
25 Conservation and Energy and the Louisiana Geological Survey shall convene an advisory
26 committee to provide input and guidance, which shall include:

27 (1) The chairman of the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment,
28 or his designee.

29 (2) The chairman of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources, or his designee.

1 (3) Representatives from relevant state agencies selected by the secretary of the
2 department and the director of the Louisiana Geological Survey.

3 (4) Representatives from industry with experience in subsurface data and resource
4 development selected by the secretary of the department and the director of the Louisiana
5 Geological Survey.

6 (5) Representatives from academic institutions with relevant expertise selected by
7 the secretary of the department and the director of the Louisiana Geological Survey.

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Conservation and Energy and
9 the Louisiana Geological Survey, in conducting their review, are encouraged to consult and
10 coordinate with the office of permitting and compliance, the office of enforcement, the office
11 of state resources, the office of energy, and any other relevant state entities to identify all
12 subsurface data in the possession of, or accessible to, the state regardless of the medium or
13 format in which such data is stored.

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Conservation and Energy and
15 the Louisiana Geological Survey include in their review an assessment of the following:

16 (1) Whether existing confidentiality periods established in R.S. 44:1(B) remain
17 appropriate in light of current industry conditions, data technologies, and the public interest
18 in accessible subsurface data.

19 (2) The impact of the data ownership and retention provisions of R.S. 30:213(A)(2)
20 on the state's ability to establish a comprehensive subsurface data set, including any potential
21 mechanisms for voluntary data contribution or acquisition.

22 (3) Whether the adoption of standardized digital submission requirements for well
23 logs, electrical surveys, and drilling records would facilitate the establishment and
24 maintenance of a comprehensive data set.

25 (4) Whether a formal interagency data-sharing framework between the offices of the
26 department and the Louisiana Geological Survey would improve coordination and reduce
27 duplication of effort.

28 (5) Evaluation of policies that would promote or require the submission of well log
29 data in digital format, including industry-standard formats such as LAS files, to improve
30 accessibility, interoperability, and long-term preservation of such data.

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the proposal shall include recommendations
2 regarding the LGS Well Log and Core Repository, developed with sufficient flexibility to
3 allow for consideration of a range of potential approaches and shall include, but not be
4 limited to:

5 (1) A description of the history and development of the well log and core repository.

6 (2) A summary of recent changes, renovations, and progress.

7 (3) An assessment of current capabilities, limitations, and needs.

8 (4) Consideration of options for facility modernization, expansion, and long-term
9 preservation of materials.

10 (5) Consideration of opportunities for enhanced digital access, cataloging, and
11 integration with other data systems, including the digitization and standardization of well log
12 data, such as LAS files, where appropriate, and potential interoperability or integration with
13 existing state systems such as the Strategic Online Natural Resources Information System
14 (SONRIS).

15 (6) Identification of potential partnerships, including public, private, and academic
16 collaborations.

17 (7) Preliminary considerations related to implementation, including phasing and
18 potential funding approaches.

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Conservation and Energy and
20 the Louisiana Geological Survey shall submit the proposal, with written findings and
21 recommendations, no later than March 1, 2027, to the following:

22 (1) The House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment.

23 (2) The Senate Committee on Natural Resources.

24 (3) The Natural Resources Commission.

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that it is the intent of the legislature that this effort
26 provide a clear and informed foundation for future policy decisions, investments, and actions
27 related to the preservation and utilization of Louisiana's subsurface data resources.

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
29 secretary of the Department of Conservation and Energy, the director of the Louisiana
30 Geological Survey, and the chairman of the State Mineral and Energy Board.

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 104 Engrossed

2026 Regular Session

Coates

Urges and requests the Dept. of Conservation and Energy and the La. Geological Survey to establish an advisory committee to review existing law and regulations governing subsurface data, identify opportunities for interagency coordination and modernization regarding the collection, retention, and accessibility of well logs, core samples, and other subsurface data held by the state, and develop a proposal for a comprehensive subsurface data system, with written findings and recommendations, for submission to the legislature by March 1, 2027.