

2015 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 623

BY REPRESENTATIVE REYNOLDS

DISTRICTS/SPECIAL: Creates a special taxing district in Webster Parish to fund the coroner's office

1 AN ACT

2 To enact Part V of Chapter 36 of Title 13 of Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be
3 comprised of R.S. 13:5761 through 5764, relative to the Webster Parish coroner's
4 office; to provide for the creation of a taxing district to fund the Webster Parish
5 coroner's office; to provide for the boundaries of the district; to authorize the levy
6 and collection of ad valorem taxes; to provide for the use of such proceeds; to
7 provide for the powers and duties of the coroner's office; and to provide for related
8 matters.

9 Notice of intention to introduce this Act has been published
10 as provided by Article III, Section 13 of the Constitution of
11 Louisiana.

12 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

13 Section 1. Part V of Chapter 36 of Title 13 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of
14 1950, comprised of R.S. 13:5761 through 5764, is hereby enacted to read as follows:

15 PART V. WEBSTER PARISH

16 §5761. Assessment district; creation; boundaries; and governance

17 A.(1) There is hereby created within the parish of Webster, as more
18 specifically provided in Subsection B of this Section, a body politic and corporate
19 which shall be known as the "Coroner's Office Funding District", hereinafter in this
20 Section referred to as the "district". The district shall be a political subdivision of

1 the state as defined in the Constitution of Louisiana and created for the purpose of
2 funding the office of coroner for Webster Parish.

3 (2) The boundaries of the district shall be coterminous with the boundaries
4 of the parish, and the duly elected coroner of the parish or a person acting in that
5 capacity, shall be the governing authority of the district.

6 §5762. Authority to tax

7 The governing authority for the district may levy and collect, in the same
8 manner and at the same time as all other ad valorem taxes on property subject to
9 taxation by the parish of Webster, a special ad valorem tax, not to exceed eight mills,
10 upon all taxable immovable property situated within the boundaries of the district.
11 The tax shall remain in effect in subsequent years unless changed as provided by
12 law. The taxes generated by the millage levied shall be collected free of deductions
13 for retirement systems.

14 §5763. Tax proceeds; compensation of coroner and employees

15 The proceeds of the tax shall be used solely and exclusively for the purposes
16 and benefit of the district and in accordance with the provisions of this Section.

17 (1) An annual salary shall be paid to the coroner in lieu of all fees for his
18 services as Webster Parish coroner or ex officio parish physician or health officer.
19 The coroner's salary shall be payable on his own warrant.

20 (2) All salaries or fees of deputy or assistant coroners, secretaries,
21 stenographers, clerks, technicians, investigators, official photographers, or other
22 assistants shall be paid from the proceeds of the tax.

23 (3) All necessary expenses incidental to and associated with the operation
24 and functions of the coroner's office including maintenance, utilities, equipment,
25 supplies, goods, and services shall be paid in accordance with the budget of the
26 office of the coroner.

27 (4) The parish governing authority or any local municipality shall not be
28 obligated to pay any fee or cost associated with the operation and administration of
29 the coroner's office.

1 §5764. Powers and duties

2 A. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the coroner or his
3 designee, may purchase or rent immovable property as necessary for the performance
4 of the coroner's official duties. The ownership of such property shall be vested in the
5 name of the office of the coroner for the parish of Webster, provided that all
6 purchases and rentals are funded through the budget for the office of the coroner.

7 B. The coroner shall establish and set the salaries and benefits for the deputy
8 coroners, secretaries, stenographers, clerks, technicians, investigators, official
9 photographers, or any other office assistants.

10 C. Except as provided for in Subsection E of this Section, the coroner shall
11 be responsible for contracting and funding all services and obligations including but
12 not limited to autopsies, morgue operations, investigations, court appearances and
13 testimonies, interdictions and commitments of mental or incompetent cases, and
14 attending or assisting physicians in interdiction or commitment cases.

15 D. The coroner shall receive a reasonable fee or compensation for any
16 physical or mental examination or investigation that is requested by the district
17 attorney, or any judge, sheriff, or chief of police of Webster Parish, or by any
18 responsible citizen or resident when acting in good faith in an emergency and in the
19 furtherance of the public good and safety.

20 E. The parish governing authority shall pay a reasonable fee or remuneration
21 for mental or physical examinations, investigations, commitments, interdictions,
22 court attendance, or testimony associated with the office of the parish coroner.

23 F. Nothing contained in this Section shall be interpreted as diminishing any
24 of the authority of the coroner as delegated to him in the constitution and laws of this
25 state.

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)]

HB 623 Original

2015 Regular Session

Reynolds

Abstract: Provides for the creation of a special taxing district in Webster Parish to solely support the Webster Parish Coroner's Office.

Proposed law creates an assessment district to be known as the "Coroner's Office Funding District" with boundaries to be coterminous with the boundaries of Webster Parish and to be governed by the coroner of the parish.

Proposed law authorizes the governing authority of the district to levy and collect ad valorem taxes not to exceed eight mills on all property subject to taxation by the parish and further provides that such taxes shall be free of deductions for retirement systems.

Proposed law requires that the proceeds of such taxes be used for the benefit of the district, including the salaries of the coroner, his assistants, secretaries, stenographers, clerks, technicians, investigators, official photographers, and all necessary expenses related to the operation and functions of the office.

Proposed law prohibits the parish governing authority or other local municipality from being obligated to pay any fee or cost associated with the operation of the office.

Proposed law provides relative to the powers and duties of the coroner as follows:

- (1) Authorizes the purchase or rental of immovable property and provides relative to ownership of such property.
- (2) Requires the coroner to establish the salary and benefits for all employees associated with the coroner's office.
- (3) Requires the coroner to be responsible for all contracting and funding of all services and obligations relative to the coroner's duties.
- (4) Requires the coroner to receive a reasonable fee or compensation for certain services requested by the district attorney, any judge, sheriff, the chief of police, or any responsible citizen or resident when acting in good faith in an emergency and in furtherance of the public good or safety.
- (5) Requires the parish governing authority to pay a reasonable fee or remuneration for certain services associated with the duties of the coroner's office.

(Adds R.S. 13:5761-5764)